

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. *BK 72.33* Copyright No.

Shelf. *C775G6*

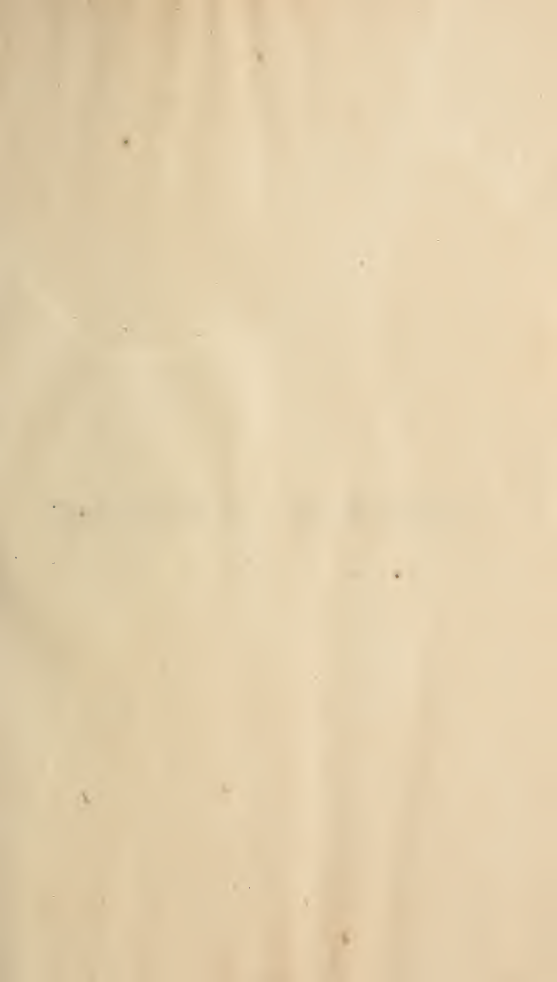
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

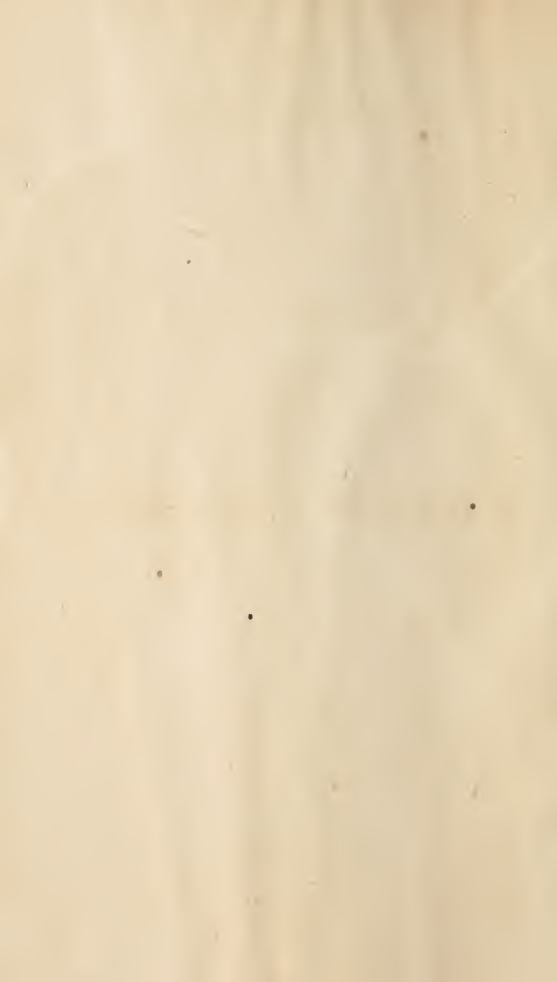
Deposited

Sept 10 - 1849

Wm. Miller

Secy. C. L.





GOSPEL MANNA.

GOSPEL MANNA

FOR

CHRISTIAN PILGRIMS:

BEING

BRIEF COMMENTS ON RICH TEXTS.

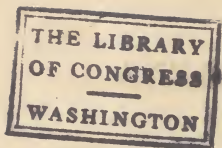
BY

REV. HENRY COWLES.



OBERLIN:
JAMES M. FITCH.

1849.



BX 7233
C775G6

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the
year 1849, by

Rev. Henry Cowles,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Ohio.

P R E F A C E.

THE greater part of the chapters comprised in this volume were published nearly in their present form about ten years since in the Oberlin Evangelist, under the title of "SHORT SERMONS." They are laid before the Christian public in their present form in the humble hope that they may promote the spirituality and consequent usefulness of all who hunger and thirst after righteousness. The subjects treated are somewhat miscellaneous, the sole object in their selection being to have them

truly spiritual and practical. If scriptural holiness shall be hereby promoted, the writer's hopes will be met and his prayers answered.

HENRY COWLES.

Oberlin, Jan., 1849.



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

CONTRITE HEART,17

CHAPTER II.

MOURNING FOR SIN,22

CHAPTER III.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN,26

CHAPTER IV.

SALVATION FROM SIN,31

CHAPTER V.

FREENESS AND FULLNESS OF GOSPEL PRO-	
VISIONS,.....	37

CHAPTER VI.

NECESSITY OF PRAYER,.....	42
---------------------------	----

CHAPTER VII.

SEEKING GOD,.....	46
-------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII.

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD,	52
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

GOD'S FEELINGS TOWARDS SIN,	58
-----------------------------------	----

CHAPTER X.

THE MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST, 63	
---	--

CHAPTER XI.

THE SYMPATHIZING HIGH PRIEST,	70
-------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER XII.

THE WORK OF FAITH,	75
--------------------------	----

CHAPTER XIII.

NECESSITY OF FAITH,	81
---------------------------	----

CHAPTER XIV.

POWER OF FAITH,	86
-----------------------	----

CHAPTER XV.

FAITH WORKING BY LOVE,	91
------------------------------	----

CHAPTER XVI.

FAITH AND WORKS,	97
------------------------	----

CHAPTER XVII.

SUSTAINING GRACE THROUGH FAITH,	104
---------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVIII.

ABIDING IN CHRIST,	112
--------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XIX.

LOVE TO ENEMIES,	119
------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XX.

STABILITY OF HEART,	125
---------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXI.

MANY DECEIVED,	131
----------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXII.

HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST,	142
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DIVINE NATURE OF CHRIST,	157
------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIV.

REMEMBRANCE OF CHRIST,	164
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXV.

OFFICES OF THE SPIRIT,.....171

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST,182

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST—CON-
TINUED,.....193

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT,.....202

CHAPTER XXIX.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT—CONTINUED,210

CHAPTER XXX.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT—CONTINUED,219

CHAPTER XXXI.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT—CONCLUDED,228

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CHURCH PAST AND FUTURE,235

CHAPTER XXXIII.

GOD'S LOVE FOR ZION,.....241

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY,.....247

CHAPTER XXXV.

WISE IN WINNING SOULS,254

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE STONE ROLLED AWAY,260

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ISRAEL—A PRINCE WITH GOD,270

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ASCRPTIONS FOR REDEEMING LOVE,276

GOSPEL MANNA.

CHAPTER I.

CONTRITE HEART.

“To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word.”—*Isa.* 66 : 2.

WHO is the speaker? “He that sitteth on the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers,—that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, or a tent to dwell in”—that makes the highest heavens his throne, the earth his foot-stool, and immensity his habitation; *He* it is who says, “To this man will I look, even

to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word."

Mark now the character described. Reader, is it yours? Is *your* heart smitten for your sin, yea, even with pungent grief and brokenness of spirit, because you have *done wrong against God*? Do your sins come up in dark and long array, not mainly to appal your soul with fear, but to pierce it with grief and cover it with shame, and sink it low before God in prostration? Do you long to hide yourself in the dust before God, oppressed with the unutterable baseness and cruel wrong of your sins? Do you wonder exceedingly how God can forgive such a sinner as yourself, and almost feel that you can never ask it, and scarcely accept it if granted? And does your soul refuse to be comforted, unless in some way God can be honored over you, and the wrong you have done Him can be repaired, and the dishonor you have cast on his law can be wiped away? Then if such be

your heart, the text speaks to you. It breathes unutterable mercy, amazing condescension. That God, whose eyes are a flame of fire upon the hardened sinner, looks with love on you. That voice which broke in thunders from Sinai, whispers from Calvary to you: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be like wool;" For "He pardons like a God."

Truly it is said of him, that "He has respect to the lowly." Yes, though the universe is his care, and the winds and the waters are his servants; though the nations are his kingdom, the angels his ministers, the heaven of heavens his throne, and all the stars his dwelling-place and heritage forever, yet his eye overlooks not *you*. Though there are purer ones around his spotless throne, and sweeter songs and nobler minds, yet not thereby does his interest abate for you. "To this man will I look." Yes, trembling penitent, God looks on thee. The glitter of thrones He heeds not—the

pomp of the great, the swell of the proud “He knoweth afar off”—but his regards are upon thee, as if it were in his heart to love thee. Oh, He *does love thee*.—Amazing, that “the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, who dwelleth in the high and holy place, should also dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit,”—but so it is. God has said it, else who could believe it?

And *why* said He these words of precious, yet most unmerited consolation? “To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones.”

Now, therefore, let your soul be poured out like water before the Lord. Cast your crown at his feet, and *yourself* too. Adore and praise. Strike the harp with heaven’s own song:—“Not unto *us*, O Lord,” “Worthy art *thou*” of honor, glory, praise, *all*, ALL, forever and forever.

And now confide, believe, be a child, and trust your Father. Cherish his

smiles. Be glad of those looks of love, and sweetly consecrate your being to such a God. Can you do less? Can you withhold your heart, your wealth, your good name, or any, even the *dearest* things from *Him* whose *look* on a dying worm is heaven? O ransomed soul, withhold not, lest you abuse redeeming love, and He who died that you might live, and wept that you might sing, should weep again over your ungrateful, guilty, and periled, if not lost spirit. Think of the tears of Jesus—the “*look*” of God.

CHAPTER II.

MOURNING FOR SIN.

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.”—*Zech.* 12: 10.

NOT all sorrow, nor even all sorrow for sin is “repentance unto salvation,” and “sorrow after a godly sort.” Esau was sad and “cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry,” yet not for his *guilt*, but for his *loss*. And Judas “repented himself.” He even made restitution, and confessed his sin.

How, then shall we know real from spurious sorrow for sin—the holy from the

selfish? The text gives us two characteristics of gospel repentance, and its antecedent cause. They “mourn in bitterness,” and they mourn from “looking on Him whom they have pierced.” These are the characteristics; and this sorrow is produced in consequence of God’s “pouring out a spirit of grace and of supplication.”

Reader, what is your mourning for sin? Too often is such mourning exceedingly and basely *cheap*. It costs little anguish—little rending of spirit. What is yours? Like the mourning for an only son?—with bitterness, as over one’s first born? Has the sting of sorrow pierced your very soul, when goodness abused, and love slighted, has led you to repentance? So it *must* be, and so it *should* be, for it is “an evil and a bitter thing” to have abused such love and broken such law.

Whence arises gospel penitence?—“They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him.”

I knew a sinner under some conviction for sin. His soul was solemn. He retired to his chamber alone, that he might think of his sins, and see what must be done. He saw that he had broken God's perfect law. He felt sin upon his conscience. He saw the ceaseless kindness of God's providence, which he had requited only with abuse and rebellion. He saw the righteous doom of the wicked, and knew it *might* be and *ought* to be his own. But after all this, as yet there was terror, but no grief—anguish, but no broken relenting. At last there seemed to stand before him the cross of Jesus; and the impression fastened upon his mind, *I was his murderer*. It was not the Jews, nor the Romans, so much as it was *my sin* that pierced his side and nailed his hands; and yet He looks on me with pity and meekness, as if He loved me, and would gladly pardon my cruel sins against Him. *Here his heart broke*. The blended view of a Savior's sufferings and love,

and his own guilt in abusing such love, touched the deep springs of grief and relenting. It was sweet to weep, and sweet to *sink* before such a Savior.

Reader, is this your experience? Something like this in kind you must have felt if the Spirit has ever reproved you for sin in not having believed on Christ, and if his goodness has ever “led you to repentance.” If you have never seen this and felt it, go to your chamber—bring before you these facts—let them sink into your soul—look on Him whom you have pierced, and feel that it is *you yourself*—that your hands have virtually done the deed.

But does every man who thinks over these thoughts feel real penitence? No. It is possible for the sinner to know all this and see it, and yet harden his heart against all right feeling. If he will, he can attempt to justify himself against God, and wrap himself up in the filthy rags of his own self-righteousness, and say with the murderers of Christ, and in the same

spirit; "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets."—*Matt. 23: 30.*

In fact it is only when a spirit of grace and of supplication is poured out, that the view of Christ crucified calls forth deep and sincere mourning for sin.

Reader, would you open your heart to the work of that Spirit, and implore its holy presence, and its convicting, melting power? Then ask God in his grace, to give you the spirit of prayer, and of broken relenting; come down low enough before God to ask *help* and to *use* it when graciously offered; then in the spirit of grace and supplication you will look on Him whom you have pierced, and mourn with repentance unto salvation not to be repented of forever.

CHAPTER III.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN.

“And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”—*Heb.* 10: 17.

BUT can my sin be ever blotted from the memory of God? Can God *forget*, so as to cease to know the guilty deeds which I have done? No—this cannot be; and yet the language has meaning. Though God cannot forget, yet He can *act* as if He did. He can treat me as if I had never sinned, or as if he had utterly forgotten all my past sins, “and cast them behind his back,” or “drowned them in the depths of the sea,” or, in the expressive language of the Old Testament dispensation, *covered* them, by atonement and pardon, so that they are seen no more. Yes, God can welcome

the pardoned sinner to the embrace and confidence and communion of his love, as if that soul were pure from sin as an angel's. And is not this a precious meaning?

I have wronged a kind, earthly father. The act involves both disobedience and ungrateful abuse of love. How can I bear to meet that father's eye? Yet it does not frown. I could almost wish it did—it would be so *just*. The respect I have always felt for him, combined now with conscious unworthiness, seems to forbid my ever coming into his presence. Can he ever be to me a father again? Yes, he knows a way. “My son, says he, I know you have done wrong—but I am more than happy to see you penitent and humble. You are welcome to my arms as if you had never done it. Say no more about that deed, and be assured I shall never speak of it, or even *think* of it again. You are my *son*, and all a father's love shall rest on you as fully as it ever did, or ever could.”

The reader will remember the inimitable story of the prodigal son, the beauty and glory of which lie in the part sustained by the father. Place before your mind that father. Think of the insult and wrong he had received from his son. An oriental father and especially a Jew, kept his sons around him on his ancient inheritance, from generation to generation. Foreign commerce was almost forbidden—emigration scarcely tolerated. The son who went abroad to other lands forsook the ordinances and worship of God, and turned his back upon the land of Jehovah's promises and footsteps.

Such was the guilt of this son. But he returns. "While yet a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." He cannot hear through the confession which his son has prepared, but hastens "the best robe and the fatted calf," and all the tokens of free pardon, and warm-hearted rejoicing.

And this is God — God to the returning penitent. This looks like the spirit of the text — “Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” O, what cannot God forgive! This pardoning love — it is an ocean, shoreless, fathomless, exhaustless. Let our sins sink into it, to be remembered no more. And then, reader, shall we go on in sin again, and worse than ever? Does not your whole soul say within you, no — never — Lord save me from ever sinning again — from thee do I seek deliverance, “even grace to help in every season of need?” If you have not felt this, then are you yet a stranger both to all the influences of pardon, and to pardon itself. If you *have* felt it, remember the words of your Lord — “go, and sin no more.”

CHAPTER IV.

SALVATION FROM SIN.

“Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.”—*Matt.* 1 : 21.

THE salvation of a sinner who is both condemned and depraved, manifestly includes two parts—deliverance from condemnation for his sin and deliverance from the sin itself; in other words, pardon and sanctification. Salvation must be utterly incomplete, if either of these elements be wanting. The sinner sanctified, but not pardoned, would be an object of pity if not of sympathy with the holy ones of heaven; his heart being prepared for heaven's purity and songs, while his former sins, yet unpardoned, demand his suffering in hell forever. But

this difficulty can never occur. No soul was ever yet sanctified without the conspiring influence of pardon. We are not very prone either to seek for, or to presuppose deliverance from sin, before deliverance from condemnation.

But reverse the order, and then many are eager to divorce these inseparable conditions and parts of man's salvation. They love the pardon. The deliverance from sin comes soon enough for their purpose, if they find it at the grave—a passport to heaven. They would not be behind their brethren in celebrating the great work of Christ for sinners; but still, their minds rest wholly on the pardon he procures, and not on his saving his people from their sins. Perhaps they have not read the text, or have entirely failed to understand it. It may not yet have entered their minds, that if Christ is a Savior at all, “he came to save his people from their sins,” and that pardon is only a preparation for that ultimate

end — a threshold only by which that building is entered, or a scaffolding to facilitate its erection.

This omission of one part of the Savior's work might be better endured, were not the part omitted most vital in itself, and even essential to salvation from hell. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Those, therefore, who rejoice in the hope of pardon, but yet live the slaves of sin, lose not only a part, and the chief part of the Savior's blessing, but they are sure to lose all. Uncleansed from sin, they never can take those harps of gold, or join that heavenly song "to Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sin in his own blood."

And this is as it should be; for what could they do, or enjoy, in heaven? If they have done nothing for Christ here, into what reward could they enter? To what "joy or crown of rejoicing" could

they be admitted when they have fought *their* fight, and finished *their* course, and gathered up the fruits of *their* labors?

In another view, this is as it should be; for he who can consent to take the pardon and then abuse it with a life of sin, *ought to go to hell*. He who is not moved by pardon, and moved, too, sweetly and mightily to seek deliverance from sin, does not deserve to have pardon; he is not fit for heaven; he must "go to his own place." The final adjustment will assign his place where the wailing spirits are.

But the Savior will do his blessed work. He will save his people from their sins—much in this world, (how much we can not and need not say,) but completely when earthly things shall pass away, and faith be changed to sight. I say *much* in this world, because the text plainly refers to his work as done here on earth. He came here to do it. He assumed the *name here* to signify the work he came

here to do. He came to open the way for pardon by his death, and to create a mighty moral influence, which, in connection with his Spirit, shall sanctify his people. Happy those who receive Christ for what he is, and experience in themselves the salvation which he came to achieve.

CHAPTER V.

FREENESS AND FULLNESS OF GOSPEL PROVISIONS.

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him, also freely give us all things?—*Rom. 8: 32.*”

LET the child of God make out the catalogue of his spiritual wants. They cannot stretch beyond the “all things,” of which the text speaks. He may therefore come to this vast storehouse of blessings and find an adequate supply.

Convicted by sin—condemned by God’s law—and repelled from his throne—does he want pardon? In Christ it is as free as the living waters. “There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.”

Do past iniquities seem to forbid his ever coming like a child to God, and does he wish, almost against hope, that these sins might be covered, and access to a Father's heart be opened? In Christ it is done. "His blood cleanseth from all sin." "Their iniquities will I remember no more." "Having boldness to enter into the the holiest by the blood of Jesus."

Is his soul fiercely assaulted by Satan —distracted with dark and blasphemous suggestions —despoiled of hope and peace, and filled with fear or even with despair? In Christ is victory and peace. He is stronger than the strong man armed. He vanquished the prince of darkness, and "saw him fall as lightning from heaven." Reader, you "can do all things through Christ strengthening you." With his aid, "resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Does Satan accuse you before God's throne day and night? Aware, as you must be, how much occasion he has to

accuse you, do you fear that he will prevail? "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, and even now is at the Father's right hand, making intercession for us."

Do you want an Intercessor there to plead your cause, to offer *your* prayers, and *his own* for you? You have one — one whom "God always heareth," for it is his own Son — one "who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and who has himself fought with Satan, and with the flesh, for he "was tempted in all points as we are." "Seeing, then, that we have such a great High Priest, let us hold fast our profession."

Christian, do you want victory over the world, even every form of sin and temptation? "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" — faith in Jesus the Son of God."

Do you want an abiding interest in Jesus' love — a perpetual union of soul with Him — his everlasting smiles of

peace and love upon you? O, how sweet the consciousness of having it, but it is yours. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

And finally, do you want to be redeemed from all that is frail and mortal — from all that tempts successfully to sin — and have your vile body made like Christ's glorious body, and your spirit made forever pure? In Christ it shall be done. "Whom He justified, them He also glorified." "Who shall change our vile body that it may be like Christ's glorious body." "The sting of death is sin; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Contemplate now the *pledge* of all these blessings. How resistless the argu-

ment! "He that spared not his own Son, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?" Can God withhold *any thing*, when he has given his Son? Having paid the ransom, will he leave us to perish in prison, slavery, or death? Having made the stupendous sacrifice, will he lightly neglect to secure the great object for which the sacrifice was made? Or, in another view, can He who so loved the world as to give his only Son, have so little love as to leave his redeemed ones in darkness, want, and peril? Can He who loved us, when sinners, enough to give his Son, so cease to love us, when partially sanctified, as to withhold any aid needful for our living to his glory? Can He who, with blood, redeemed us that we might be, and should be holy, forget his object or grudge the sacrifice requisite to secure it? Impossible! O, the valid security for spiritual blessings! Can God withhold the needful grace? Never. He that spared not his own Son, will give us

all things else that we need. Yes, and "*freely*," too; with infinite freeness. Think how freely he gave his Son. Who asked for that unspeakable gift? At whose entreaties and strong supplications was it given? O! it came forth "*freely*," from the bosom of ineffable love! Just so freely — though not always unasked — but so freely, does God always give. Ye that doubt and fear, and shrink away, *believe it — so freely does God give all things that you really need.* What shall we say, then, to these things? "If God be for us, what on earth or in hell, can be against us?" "Thanks be to God who gave Christ — who gives victory — who, in Christ, and through Him, "*freely gives us all things.*"

CHAPTER VI.

THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER.

“Thus saith the Lord God. I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.”—*Ezek.* 36 : 37.

THEN God will have his people ask before they receive. Though he has promised, and the promise is most sure, yet the blessing comes not unsought.

In regard to his people, God says, “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean ; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, I will cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes ;” (v. 25–27) and

finally closes by saying, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." Prayer, then, is the condition of the Christian's spiritual blessings. God will have him *pray* for the good before it is given.

And why?

1. *For the good of his people.* It were not well for them to live afar from God. It would be a most sad arrangement which should furnish them with their daily bread, without their coming to their Father's table to ask and receive it. I love to have my children gather round my table, and ask their father for their daily bread. It does *me* good, and *them* too. I have the happiness of giving, and they of receiving. The scene cherishes the sweetest affections. It is one of the brightest and most precious in the circle of domestic enjoyments.

So around our heavenly Father's table. I am glad that we may gather round it often—as often as we please, and look

up towards that heaven-beaming face, and catch the smiles of that unearthly love, and ask for the bread of life—strength for holy living—pardon for sins past—victory over temptation to come. As God is happy in this—so am I. It is inexpressibly sweet to come believing, confiding, loving, and receiving.

There is, then, reason enough why God should say—“I will be inquired of.” Yes—let the blessing come only with, and never without prayer. Let me first feel my dependence. Let me be made deeply sensible that this good comes from my *Father*. It is then more than twice blessed. I could not prize it, if I did not know that it came from Him. But when on my knees, in the dust, I have sought it through Christ, and then it comes with a Father’s smiles, it is full of Heaven. It is a *Father’s* blessing.

2. There is another reason why God insists on prayer, namely, *That he may honor his Son*. Look into that upper

sanctuary. There Jesus stands, forever making intercession for us. There blessings are sought and given each hour, and every blessing given, reflects honor on the Son of God, because it is given through his name, and for his sake. God loves to show his Son this honor. He will have it known through all heaven, and through the universe, that He gives mercy to the guilty only for the sake of his Son. Thus He will manifest his regard for Christ, and for his injured law. And thus Christ “sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.” Here is part of the “joy set before him, for which he endured the cross, despising the shame.” And we are glad to have it so. We are happy that Christ should now have his reward for all his pains. Once he bore the hidings of his Father’s face—now let him enjoy the infinite and everlasting approval of the Father, renewed, reiterated afresh in every instance, in which, for Christ’s sake, the Father answers a believing prayer.

In this, too, the Father is both pleased and honored. “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

And now will God give me blessings, unsought by prayer, and thereby dishonor his Son, and dishonor himself; and try to make me happy far away from his own table, and from his smiling face, and happy, too, without rejoicing in the glory of my Savior? God could not make me happy thus, if he were to try. He might lavish on me all earthly good, or raise me in heaven to the rank in glory from which Satan fell, yet there if I saw not his face—received not the favor from his hands—and selfishly rejoiced in my own good, but not in his glory, I should be only wretched.

What *wisdom*, then, as well as *love* dictated the everlasting and blessed condition—“I will yet for all this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.” Why should I ever wish for good, unsought, *unblessed*?

CHAPTER VII.

SEEKING GOD.

“When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face Lord will I seek.”—*Ps. 27: 8.*

WHAT is coming to God? To many it seems all mystery. But the Psalmist makes it plain. Here we have the very thing in the simplest language possible. We see the very act itself. It is the response of the soul, to the voice of God. For God speaks. His voice is heard, and the heart leaps up at the sound. Yes, God from on high looks down on the benighted, hopeless, wayward wanderer, and says, “Seek ye my face.” That voice breaks on the silence of my despair, like sunlight on the

tomb. It throws a light across my path of dark wandering, and I look up to behold it. It is a father's voice inviting to his bosom a lost and guilty child. I had not supposed it possible that God could call me back in love and kindness. Oppressed with conscious guilt, restrained by unbelief, and bewildered by the great deceiver, I had said, there is no hope for me ; and my spirit sunk within me. But the voice from heaven breaks on my ear—"Seek ye my face," and my heart leaps forth for joy, and responds—"Thy face, Lord, will I seek." This is coming to God. It is not going on a pilgrimage to some far land, where God may be deemed peculiarly present. It is not the tasking of one's soul with a penance of tears, and vows, and prayers. Nor is it the drawing nigh with the lips when the heart is far off. But it is the heart replying to God—"Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The soul itself goes forth to seek and *find* its Maker.

And it goes *at his bidding*. It does not rush uncalled into Jehovah's awful presence. It does not come in its own way either, but in the way of God's providing. When the golden sceptre is extended it ventures to approach. When a father speaks, in the bursting of a parent's heart of love, then the child, though long estranged in guilt and darkness, may come, and humbly hope for the smiles of life.

Nor does he hope in vain. That call from God which breaks on my ear so strangely is not *delusive*! that I should follow it only to disappointment and deeper despair. It is not *unmeaning*, so that I may find that Father's heart cold and repulsive towards me, when I have sought his face with all my heart. It is not a *transient gush* of parental feeling, which having depended on to-day, I may find changed or gone to-morrow. No. It is none of these things. It is God's own voice, breathing in sincerity the feelings of his heart of changeless love. It can-

not deceive me. It never yet has deceived one returning penitent. And it never will.

Reader, you may come at its sweet call—you will find a Father's heart gushing with love and joy to meet you. Only seek *as you should*. Only come, thou needy, guilty one, *in this spirit*, and mercy is at hand. Yes, were sinners of every rank, and every grade of guilt, from under the whole heaven, to come thus, even "as clouds and as doves to their windows" before a gathering storm, they would not be too numerous to find mercy. Not one, coming in such a spirit, could be rejected. Such coming would be a jubilee to heaven. Oh, haste that promised, blessed day of earth's deliverance, and heaven's rejoicing. It will come when the hearts of men throughout a sinful world shall say—"Thy face, Lord, will I seek."

CHAPTER VIII.

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.

“Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.”—1 *Jno.* 1 : 3.

SO an Apostle affirms of himself, and his Christian brethren. *But what is this fellowship*, which exists between redeemed sinners, and their God, and Savior? It implies,

1. *Friendship.* “How can two walk together unless they be agreed?” What fellowship can God have with sinners, while they are “enemies to Him, by wicked works;” or they with Him, while in their hearts, “they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge

of thy ways," and "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?"

Manifestly, then, the foundation for fellowship must be laid in friendship. The sinner must be reconciled to God, through the blood of the cross, and by an entire conversion of his own feelings from alienation to affection — from stubborn, proud indifference, to broken-hearted penitence. From the attitude of an enemy to God and Christ, he must take that of a friend. Then the way is open for fellowship.

2. Fellowship implies *love*.

Not all who feel friendly towards each other, have real fellowship. Rational, hearty, efficient fellowship, there cannot be, except on the foundation of real love between the subjects of such fellowship.

Reader, you cannot have *fellowship* with Christ, unless you really *love* his character, and let your very soul flow out in sweet complacency, as you contemplate his beauties and glories. Nor can

Christ hold fellowship with you, except as he sees in you this beauty, which his soul loves—the beauty of pure and glowing affection for himself.

3. Fellowship implies *sympathy*—yes, necessarily, and eminently. We might almost say, that fellowship *is* sympathy—a fellow feeling—the beating of hearts in unison, as their affections fasten on the same objects, and flow in the same channel.

Dear reader, do you know any thing of this sympathy with Christ? Do you feel as he felt, for the Church—for God's glory—for a sinking world? Did you ever enter into the sympathies of his bursting heart, as he wept over the murderous city, or drank, for the guilty sinner, the cup of pain—or bore on his heart, in prayer, his ransomed people, imploring for them, union, peace, and holiness? Do you pray *for what he prayed*, and *as he prayed*? Such prayer holds sympathy with Christ. I cannot doubt

that the beloved disciple felt, and prayed thus, and had this very thing in view, when he said, "Truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

4. Fellowship implies, also, *co-operation*. For in God's kingdom, and surely, in this great moral hospital, benevolent sympathies do not need to die away in sickly sentimentalism. There is always scope enough for benevolent *action*. Little proof of genuineness, does that kind of Christian love exhibit, which is satisfied with doing nothing for Christ, and for a sinking world. Not so did Christ either *feel*, or *live*. In his life, "he went about doing good:" in his heart he loved this work too sincerely to let his soul flow away in languishing good wishes, with no self-sacrificing labors.

Reader, in this blessed work, *do you co-operate with Christ? Is your hand with his*, in the needful toil, for enlight-

ening, persuading, and converting your fellow men? Does the same love impel you? Do the same sympathies draw you?

If so, then truly you “have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son.” And you love the work. It coincides so perfectly, and sweetly with your feelings, that it is your supreme delight. And you are glad, also, that the honor, and glory of it fall, where they are due—not to yourself, but wholly “to Him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb forever.”

Have you ever thought of the *privilege* you enjoy—too high for thought to measure—too high, almost, to be true, and real—only as nothing is too much for *infinite Love* to give? Dwell a moment on the idea. *Fellowship* with the *Father*, and with his *Son*! Sympathy, in spirit, with the Infinite Mind that sways the universe! Sympathy in labor, with him who built the heavens,

and now is building the spiritual kingdom of righteousness and peace. O! the exalted partnership! A worm allied with Infinity! A frail, guilty, but pardoned mortal, associated with the purest, brightest, best of beings—the great eternal Fountain of all purity, and love!

Let the crowns of earthly monarchs pass for dust, and their ambition and all their glory be our pity. It shall be enough, and more than enough for us, that our “fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.”

CHAPTER IX.

GOD'S FEELINGS TOWARDS SIN.

“Oh, do not this abominable thing which I hate.”—*Jer.* 44: 4.

WHOSE voice do we hear in these words? Who is this entreating us not to sin because it is that abominable thing which his soul hates? Is it indeed God, and does his own voice break on our ear, in accents of imploring entreaty? This is not the manner of a tyrant who loves to see his enemies suffer, nor of one who is reckless of the well-being of others. This looks not like what God is often thought to be. It does not bear the aspect of one who loves to command, and who lives only for the sake of exercising

and displaying power. No; this language breathes the spirit of love. It is sympathy for mortals. This will appear manifestly enough if we look a moment into the subject.

For why does God hate sin? I answer; not merely because it is disobedience and rebellion towards Himself. It is not because God happens to have committed Himself in giving a certain law, and now must at all sacrifices sustain the course to which He is committed. Nor is it merely because his own authority is insulted. There is a principle by which men in power feel the insult of disobedience keenly because it is their own authority which is disputed. Not so with God. Nor again is it because God loves to rule, and has created us merely for the sake of having subjects to rule over. Nor finally, does God hate sin because He fears that He shall lack the needful power to punish and repress rebellion. But God hates sin because sin destroys the happi-

ness of his sinning creatures. This is the fundamental reason. Sin poisons happiness, both that of the sinner, and that of all other beings who ever feel its influence, and God loves to have all his creatures happy. Therefore God can not love, but must hate sin. Therefore is sin that abominable thing which He utterly hates, and never can see without grief and abhorrence.

Any why does God so earnestly entreat us not to sin? The answer is obvious and richly instructive.

It is (1.) because God desires us to cease from sinning—yes most sincerely and intensely desires that we should sin no more at all, forever. And (2.) because the way for Him to prevent our sinning is to *persuade* us not to sin. Strange notions often becloud men's minds on this point. It is by some assumed that God moves men not to sin just as He moves a planet in the heavens, or the ocean in its bed. If this view

were the truth, there would indeed be no reason but much hypocrisy in such an entreaty as our text. But if men are entirely moral agents in the matter of sinning and of ceasing to sin, then God must act upon us as moral agents, and his entreaty comes perfectly in place among the cogent reasons to dissuade us from sinning.

Let another consideration be now suggested, which to every professedly Christian reader is worthy of most solemn, heart-searching regard. God speaks these words to his professed people—if you are one of them *to you*. The spirit of the message seems to say, “Why will my people sin? Why will they sin *at all*? Have they not known how I have loved them, and how much I have loved them, and how much I have done to save their souls from sin, and with what infinite sacrifices I have done it? And do they not know that I can not endure to have them sin? Surely they know my feelings

on this point; and is it possible they can be reckless of the grief I feel when they sin against me? I had taken them into my family and into my bosom as my dear children, and they said they would treat me as their Father and love me supremely, and renounce the world and *all sin*. Oh, why will they still do that abominable thing which I hate? Do they claim that they can not cease from sin, and throw it back upon me as a defect in my provisions for their being cleansed from sin?—and all this after I have given them such promises—all this when actually they have not believed the promises I have given, and will not come and ask for the aid which they might have? O, why will they do this most abominable thing of all, and cherish unbelief as if they could put no confidence in their own great Father?

The reader will bear in mind that when God speaks it is due from us to listen. It is also due from us to give Him credit for

honesty, and real, truth-telling sincerity. And now, professed Christian, do you believe that God hates sin—*all sin—all your sin*, and that He really entreats you not to sin again, ever? Then just here let me ask again; does He thus entreat you to cease from all sin, having made provisions of grace to help you thus to cease, or not having made provisions enough for this purpose? Which alternative is the truth? Which will you take? Which corresponds best with the gospel, with the promises, with God's revealed plan of salvation through Christ, with God's known character, with your wants, and with what you wish when God is most manifestly with you? And if ample grace to help you cease from sin, is actually offered and at hand, with what accumulated force comes home the appeal of entreaty from God, "why will ye sin any more? O, do not this abominable thing which I hate?"

CHAPTER X.

THE MERCIFUL AND FAITHFUL HIGH PRIEST.

“Wherefore in all things, it behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.”—*Heb. 2: 17, 18.*

THE plan of God for the salvation of sinful men, is a tissue of wonders. Look at the work of mediation. Contemplate, for a moment, the thing to be done. One must be found who can stand between guilty man and his righteous God—one who can come down to a vile, base mortal, and win his confidence, and touch his heart, and feel his sorrows; and who can then rise with more than

angelic dignity and influence, and stand before infinite purity, and plead for the guilty, not in vain. Who can unite in himself this sympathy with mortals, and this dignity before the King Immortal? Who shall be the bosom friend of sinful man, and the prevailing Advocate before his spotless Maker? In whom shall these wide extremes be sweetly blended? And how shall the thing be done?

God's wisdom devised a plan, and his love achieved it. Since qualities almost infinitely unlike were needed to constitute a Mediator—since there must be the sympathy of a man and the dignity of a God—Jehovah said—"Let there be a union. Let the Son of my right hand ally Himself with one of that lost race. Let human nature and divine be sweetly blended in the great High Priest of mortals."

The thing is done. "In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a merciful and

faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God. For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Yes, He must be like his brethren, before He can be both "merciful and faithful" in his mediations. He must know their wants, their weaknesses, and their woes. Then He can be *merciful*. He must know how they suffer—how they are tempted—and what they need to sustain them;—then He can be *faithful*. Now, astonishing to tell, Christ knows all this by his own experience. "Having suffered Himself, being tempted; he is able to succor them that are tempted."

Christian reader, have you thought of Jesus Christ as your elder brother? Do you see Him a man—a man of sorrows, temptations, buffetings, and trials—of human sympathies, and human frailties, too?—and have you ever thought of Him, as entering into all your sorrows, even like your nearest bosom friend? You know

He did thus when He lived among his chosen ones on earth. Then there was no heart in all that sweet community which sympathized so quickly, and so keenly with every falling tear as his did. Not one wept so freely over a brother's grave—not one felt more tenderly, or moved more promptly in view of the common ills of sickness and infirmity than He. He was a swift angel of mercy in this prison-house of woe.

And has a change passed over Him, now that his mansion is on high, and He walks not among the sinning and sorrowing, but sits enthroned among the praises of the ransomed? Ah, no: for “He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.” No: for though He sits on his high throne, He yet lives among his own people. “Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” No change is there in Him, seeing that now “He ever liveth to make intercession for us;” a great High Priest

still, "passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God."

And is He still a man, a brother?—and can He feel for me, as one who has suffered like me can feel? Sometimes this seems to be too much—in kindness, in condescension, too much: too much to be true, and too much for me to believe. But I must rebuke this unbelief, and pour out my heart in praise and wonder. Thou Lamb of Calvary—thou man of sympathies and sorrows—let me take my place at thy feet, like her of old, and "wash them with my tears." And may I lean upon thy bosom too, and know that thou wilt bear me up, and hold me fast, and be my friend and helper, my refuge and defender amid all my temptations, toils and trials through this warring life? Then I am ready for the conflict.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SYMPATHIZING HIGH PRIEST.

“For we have not an High Priest who can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”—*Heb.* 4: 15.

WE have not an High Priest who can not sympathize with mortals. But suppose we had such an one. Suppose his power and influence in that high court to be supreme, but suppose he does not know how to understand and *feel* our case. Then his rebuke could not be tempered with that most touching condescension and partial extenuation, which appear in the history of our Lord. Such an High Priest could not say of his people—“The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Suppose Him to be Gabriel. There is no lack of benevolence. Gabriel would love to plead our cause, and help us in our spiritual warfare. But how could Gabriel sympathize with our weaknesses, "be able to succor us when tempted," and tenderly "help our infirmities?"

Or suppose this High Priest to be only divine. He would indeed know all that could be known about us, our infirmities, temptations—every thing that can either modify our trials, or admit of extenuation. But all this is not *sympathy*. Even though there be combined with it all the benevolence of God's love, still it is not *sympathy*. It can not draw forth our confidence like the offered aid of a *brother*. There would be indeed enough of love and enough of power. But such an High Priest would fail in the great qualification of a sympathy which melts our hearts, wins our confidence, and charms our souls away from sin and unbelief.

The *man* Christ Jesus, in mysterious union with the Eternal Son, combines all we want. No arm is mightier than his—no knowledge of our case is more perfect—no heart so wonderfully sympathizing, so tender, so condescending.

Christian reader, think of your great High Priest, and see his adaptation to your wants.

Have you trials? So had He. Are you poor in earthly good? So was He. Often needy? So was He. Dependent? So was He.

Do trials touch your temper and patience? Are you reviled? And was not Christ? Are you wronged, rejected, persecuted for righteousness' sake? Surely not more than Christ. But you are tempted perhaps to peevishness, through much weariness of the flesh. And Christ, too, was often weary; and so worn with toil and trial that "his visage was more marred than any man, and his form more than the sons of men."

Perhaps you complain of appetite as a grievous temptation. Christ, too, had appetites, and once after fasting forty days, the subtle tempter told Him to command the stones to be made bread. Christ wanted the bread, but repelled the temptation. He knows the strength of temptation addressed to appetite. You may have his sympathy, and you may have his grace to help.

It may be you are tempted grievously to *ambition*. So was Christ. The devil showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and offered them to Him as cheaply as he now offers them or their like to you. But mark the simple majesty of that principle by which Christ withstood. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." To serve and worship God is the one supreme object of his being. *For Himself*, He has no glory to seek, no power to gain.

But you are tried with *cares*. And Christ had as many physical wants to care for as you have.

You have also **RESPONSIBILITIES**. But not like his who had the hypocrisy of one professed church to rebuke—the ignorance of another to enlighten, their unbelief to bear with and reprove, a new spiritual kingdom to organize and establish, and a dying world on his hands and his heart to save. Surely Christ knows how to sympathize with him who sustains many and weighty responsibilities.

And will you mention **LOSSES OF WEALTH**? Christ lost all—only He made it a free-will sacrifice, “for our sakes becoming poor, that we, through his poverty might be made rich.”

Or speak you of *the loss of friends*? Christ too lost friends, and felt the sympathies of nature flow as you do. And Christ too knows of pain—doubtless of sickness—surely of infirmity, anguish, death—and

to crown all, He was a mark for all the fiery darts of the adversary. Be assured He knows all about your temptations. Astonishing indeed that He should know them by *such means*—by laying his bosom bare to their arrows—by coming down to the arena of strife, and fighting the battle on our ground and with only our weapons. But so He did. For mark: He did not repel temptation with the almighty power of a God. He used only prayer and the “sword of the Spirit,” which are given us. “It is written,” said He, and humbly bowed the knee in prayer that God would save Him from that hour. And such are the means and aids afforded *us*. True, the angels strengthened Him, and so they do his people. But we have another helper—this same meek, kind, sympathizing Jesus. Such an High Priest, Christ had not in his trials. How sweet to his soul it would have been to have had the sympathy and help of one who stood above Him just as He now stands above us. Christian, how

sweet it should be to thy soul to know Jesus as thy Rock, thy Refuge—an High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of all thy infirmities, and yet “is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE WORK OF FAITH.

“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.—1 *Thess.*, 1: 3.

THIS reveals the great secret of primitive Christian character. Is it asked, what made those preachers and those churches such Christians? What gave birth to labors so ardent, so unwearied, so self-sacrificing, and yet so cheerful? What prompted such sacrifices and hardships? And what blended with so much suffering, so much unrivalled consolation? The answer is before us. The secret is out. Their work was the “*work of faith.*” They believed, and

therefore acted. Their faith was not a dead letter. It was not believing and yet no believing. They did not manage, by some strange art, to believe, and yet live as if they believed not. But they believed honestly and really, what they professed to believe. Such faith produced *works*. No wonder they *worked* when the vivid realities of a Savior's love and glory were before them, and eternal scenes lived and glowed in their eye.

Again, theirs was the "*labor of love*." Not labor prompted by self-righteousness, or pride, or thirst for ambitious distinction. Not labor goaded out of them by a rebuking conscience, or a frowning Deity, or the demands of public sentiment, or the chidings of their minister; and not labor done to prop a tottering hope;—but in a word, the *labor of love*. Love, sweet love, inspired it. Love to Christ filled the heart, and ruled the life. Why should it not lead to patient, ardent labor? How

could it fail to “make their willing feet in swift obedience move?”

Then there was the “*patience of hope.*” Their circumstances called for suffering. They had need of patience. They must often endure every thing which human nature can be made to suffer. What shall sustain them? The gospel hope—“hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.” Not the faint hope that they might *possibly* reach heaven, but the “strong hope which is an anchor to the soul, sure and stedfast, thrown within the vail”—made fast in the inner sanctuary. Think of the great sheet anchor, fastened to the Rock of the promises; or to double the figure, see the anchor of hope lodged in the inner sanctuary, under the very eye of Him who sits upon the mercy seat between the cherubim.

With such a hope, can your vessel be tossed, and dash, and perish? Can you fear it? Rather with such a hope can you not endure these “light afflictions which are

but for a moment," and which you know shall "work out" for you "a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?" Such hope had they, such love, such faith. Is it a strange thing that the result was work, and labor, and patience?

Is such the piety of the Christian church generally in our age? Would it were so. I wish there were less reason to appeal to the Christian public and ask—are there not collisions, dissensions, animosities, suspicions, and party jealousies among you which some of you bewail before God with bitter anguish? Is there not apathy, too, and worldliness and prayerlessness and death in the bosom of the church, instead of the work of faith and the labor of love? "Tell it not in Gath," and scarcely whisper it even, when you pour your silent sorrows into the ear of Jesus, and let your charity apologize when she can—but yet it is a grief lying heavy on the heart, that such should be the state of Christ's church in our land.

And do you ask the remedy? We have it. Return to the "work of faith, and the labor of love, and the patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." Revive a languid faith, rekindle the fires of love, and make sure the anchor of hope. These things done, would put a new face on the action of the Christian world. There would be waking to new life. There would be *doing* then, and the doing which we need—*the doing of love*.

Christian reader, shall it begin *with you*? Will you cherish this spirit of faith, and love, and hope? Will you take it into your own bosom, and let it find a sweet home there? It will gladden that home with the peace, and the light, and the joy of heaven.

CHAPTER XIII.

NECESSITY OF FAITH.

“Without faith it is impossible to please God.”—
Heb. 11: 6.

YOU may do any thing and every thing else which may be done without faith, and yet not please God. You may be moral up to the highest standard which men adopt for themselves ; you may be just, and honest, and generous, according to the best rules of earthly make, and yet not please God. You may adopt all the forms of religious worship you ever heard of, Jewish or Christian, even like Him who fasted twice in a week, and gave tithes of all, and yet did not please God. You may bestow all your goods to feed the poor and yet fail of

pleasing God. Your social and domestic virtues may be of the first order, so that you shall secure the high respect and strong affection of your fellow mortals, and yet you shall not thereby secure the favor of your Maker. You may even be as penitent as a sinner can be without looking on Him whom he has pierced, and without having his heart melted with the infinite kindness of Jesus, shown to the humble, confiding sinner, and yet your sorrows may fail to please God. Or you may have fears and anguish insupportable, and make your tears your meat day and night, and God be not propitiated by all this.

And why? Is it impossible or even *hard* to please God? Has He the lofty disdainful bearing of some of the men of earth, which will not be pleased? Shall we ascribe it to his sovereign arbitrariness that nothing will please Him without faith? No, *no*. There are most weighty reasons why you can not please God without faith. You have broken his

law. He wants to save you—but only in a way that shall sustain and not ruin his kingdom. You will not come in that way. Thus you will not allow God to bless you. You put yourself beyond the reach of his mercy, and impiously appeal to his justice, while justice condemns you. You ask God to treat you as if you had never sinned, and had no need of pardon and mercy through a Redeemer. You ask God to love you for your imagined good things, and insult Him by assuming that you have done nothing amiss. Thus you place yourself beyond the range of his grace, and make it impossible for God with all his infinite love to be pleased with you.

Again, you will not confide in Him as your Father and Friend. Is it strange that God should ask you to have confidence in his word and in his love?—or that He should be grieved and not pleased when you withhold it? While in the nature of the case, He only can pay your

mighty debt, and in the fullness of his infinite love, He is willing to do it, may He not at least ask you to trust Him for it? Is it too much for Him to say, "Look, wandering child, to your father, and believe his word, and trust his offered pardon? Come to my bosom with the filial confidence of a pardoned child?"

When the Great Father sent forth to us "his well-beloved," he said, "They will reverence my Son." When this Son magnified the law and made it honorable, so that God could be just and yet justify the guilty, and when on this ground He offered pardon to all believing penitents, it did seem that they would come, and both welcome the gift and honor the Giver. But "they denied the Lord that bought them." They trampled under foot God's Son.—This is *unbelief*. They will not receive God's testimony concerning his Son, and will not take his offered pardon. Is it strange that with such sinners, God is not well-pleased?

Unbelief virtually “makes God a liar.” It rejects his testimony. It says, “Though you threaten death and damnation, we do not fear it. Though you warn us to flee, we will not regard it. Though you offer pardon, and though if your words be true we perish without it, yet we will not take it. Though you invite us to trust Christ for salvation, and confide in thy love, we will trust neither Christ nor God.” Such unbelief “makes God a liar.” Is it marvelous that God should not be pleased with it?

But faith pleases God. Poverty-stricken beings, owing ten thousand talents, with nothing wherewith to pay—the only acceptable thing we can do is to trust Christ to pay the debt. Long and deeply polluted, the best thing we can do is to come to the fountain, and by grace, be washed and clothed in white. It would seem as if the chief request that our Father makes of us, is that we commit our souls to him *to be blessed*—that we *believe*

his love, trust his grace, and confide in his Son and Spirit for pardon, peace, purity, and perfect blessedness.

With such, God is well pleased. Over such the risen Savior weeps with joy. They are the "travail of his soul," the "joy that was set before Him," and He can be happy in filling their souls with heaven. The infinite Father's heart glows with joy amid the yearnings of compassion, and He says, "Now I can bless my son;" "bring forth the best robe; my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost and is found."

CHAPTER XIV.

POWER OF FAITH.

“Jesus answered—O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.”—*Matt. 15: 28.*

THUS Christ loves great faith, and thus mightily does it prevail. Such faith as this, humble, strong, urgent, obtains the golden key. Christ seems to say, “There is my treasure-house—take what you will—all you ask is yours.”

And is this the *manner* of our Lord? Are these the laws of his spiritual kingdom? May we dare to ask for blessings at all—dare to believe at all that we shall receive them? May we go farther, and presume to ask for *great* blessings, and really expect that Jesus will give them?

Nay more—is it possibly true that nothing pleases God and his Son so well as the strongest faith and the largest requests? Christian reader, *this is true*. Do you ask how it can be? “God’s ways are not like our ways.”

1. *God is love*. This love is well-wishing towards his creatures. Its essence is desire to do them good, and delight in doing it. The heart of infinite love has been moved to compassionate sorrow towards his fallen creatures, because He could not bless them with his favor, and make them infinitely happy in his love. *They would not be blessed*. And a father’s heart was grieved.

But the believer puts himself where God *can* bless him. The more he believes, the more God can bless. The stronger the faith, and the more enlarged the desire, the more is that soul opened to receive the rivers of God’s blessings, and of course the more does God delight in the attitude which that soul has taken.

2. *Faith honors God*, and the stronger it be, it honors God the more. For it treats God more as it should. It acknowledges Him to be more nearly what He is. The strongest faith, provided it be real faith in God's true character and promises, is never in excess—never goes beyond what the nature and the revelations of God warrant.

Moreover, such faith exhibits God in his true character before the world and the universe. It does not hold Him up as a liar, but as a being of infinite truth and love. Wherever it is known that such views are entertained of God, there an impression is made which honors God.

And more. Then God can sanction that faith by pouring out his oceans of blessings and thus can honor Himself, as He delights to do, by unfolding the boundlessness of his love.

3. *Faith asks for holiness—it trusts God to give spiritual blessings*, and therefore God loves it. Is it any wonder that

the will of God should be our sanctification?" That God should delight in this above every thing else, and therefore be most of all pleased with that faith which aspires to breathe the very spirit of Christ, and with the strongest grasp and sweetest assurance takes hold of "the exceeding great and precious promises?" Is it not quite natural that Christ should choose to have his people like Himself, that He should be best pleased to have his whole church what an inspired apostle calls "a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing?" And further, that He should wish to have them become so *as soon as possible*, and be best pleased with those who seek most earnestly for that blessed character now, and who honor Him by *believing* that such are his desires and such his readiness to bless? Is it marvelous that God should delight to have his children pure rather than polluted, believing, rather than faithless, and that too *now*? Christian reader,

do you deem this a strange thing? Can you brand it as heresy?

Will you not rather believe assuredly that God delights in faith and holiness, and then practically take hold of his exceedingly great and precious promises? "By these, we may become partakers of the divine nature. By these, (coupled always with our own efforts, we may overcome the corruptions that are in the world through lust. By these the strength of God becomes our strength, it "being perfect in our weakness," and afforded us continually "in every season of need."

CHAPTER XV.

FAITH WORKING BY LOVE.

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”—*Gal.* 5: 6.

NOT forms nor ceremonies, then, nor self-righteousness, how much soever valued, can avail anything in the religion of Christ: nothing can, but “faith which worketh by love.” “*Faith which worketh by love*”—the language, how rich it is in meaning; how perfectly to the point; how concisely and forcibly does it describe the nature and action of that faith which saves the soul from sin, and secures heaven.

There is a kind of faith—so called among men, but not often so called in the

Bible—a faith which coldly assents to the facts revealed in the Bible, but seems to see not the bearing of those facts, and cares not for their application to one's own duty or regard;—this kind of faith stands utterly over against the faith of our text. It looks on the things believed as if they were not, and feels no more interest in the admitted truth than if it were known to be the fiction of a dream.—Strange faith this indeed! The fact that men can believe the gospel, and yet live and feel as if they believed it not, is a moral mystery—a part of the deep mystery of sin. It is a fact which we should never believe if we had not seen it and felt it. Whether this mystery is to be solved by showing that such faith does not take hold of the real things of the gospel, I shall not stop to inquire. Suffice it now to say that this is not the faith required in the gospel. It is not the faith spoken of in the text.

This faith is said to *work*. And truly. It is instinct with living energy. It never

leaves the soul unmoved—the life, unaffected. And the beauty and value of our text lie in the fact that it describes, in a word, and yet most perfectly, the grand secret of the mighty energy of gospel faith. **IT WORKS BY LOVE.**

Suppose you believe the revealed fact that the Man of Calvary “bore our sins in his own body on the tree,” and your soul is filled with love of such a spirit as his. The deep fountains of feeling in your heart will break up,—will they not? Suppose you believe that He bore all those agonies meekly and joyfully, in anticipation of the joy set before him in saving your soul and other souls from ruin; and you love the pure, God-like benevolence of such a deed so much that your heart is moved with unwonted emotion and strange surprise, as you contemplate it:—can such faith, working thus by love, be altogether powerless? Can you believe and *love* too, and yet be as though you believed not?

Again : Suppose you believe the Savior's promise, " My grace shall be sufficient for thee ;"—you believe that He has " put underneath you his everlasting arms " for " grace to help in every time of need ;" and then you love his name : you are charmed with all his beauty and you feel your soul drawn sweetly to his very bosom by the melting tenderness and kindness of his Spirit—do you not believe that you could *trust* Him ? Could you possibly distrust ? Would it be possible for you to disbelieve his promises, and feel yourself forlornly cast away from his footstool ?

Or could you grope far away in darkness, as if there were no light, or stand despairingly aloof from offered grace as if God had in awful justice left you to work out your own salvation, and find your way to his face and favor if you can ? O no. You would clasp your Savior's feet, like her of old, and bathe them with your tears of gratitude and love, and *you*

would trust Him. You would say,—
“Lord, I believe ; help thou my unbelief.”

And such faith would *work*. It would constrain your very soul to *live* for Him whose beauties charm you and whose word you make your trust.

Christian reader, *try it*. Go to the Savior's feet, and there *believe* and *love*. Pour out your heart like water before the Lord, in penitence and confession first, and then in gratitude and praise. See all that Jesus is; then you will believe and love too; and then you can not fail to know the blessedness of being “changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord.”

CHAPTER XVI.

FAITH AND WORKS.

“Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone.”—*James 2: 17.*

THE meaning of this passage is that faith, if it have not works, is useless, really good for nothing. It is of no avail towards the salvation of the soul. See the connection. “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man *say* he have faith, and have not works? Can faith *save* him?” This is the point: Will his faith *save him*? No.

Or take the rest of the verse, which is an illustration of this point. A brother, or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and you send him off with good professions and good wishes, but none of the needful things; “what doth it profit?”

Will *such* blessings feed him, or clothe him? No. So faith without works is worthless in respect to the great object of saving the soul from either sin or hell.

Of course it does not save a man from *sin*; for by the very supposition, his faith brings forth no works of holiness, no fruits unto righteousness. The man lives as he always lived.

But why may it not save him from *hell*? Why may not this believer “hold Christ to his word”—“He that believeth shall be saved?”

Ans. 1. The promise of Christ was never made to *such a faith*. “If thou believest with all thy heart,” is the description given; and also, “*with the heart* man believeth unto righteousness.” The faith of the gospel takes Christ for what He is and as He is offered, and trusts Him for both pardon and holiness. It implies that the believer *acts as if he believed*.

2. Such faith *shows itself to be no gospel faith at all; but rather, base hypoc-*

risy, or cool insult to the gospel and its Author.

It is surely hypocrisy to profess to believe what is not really believed at all. Such a faith of course can produce no works.

But suppose you believe the facts of the gospel, but your heart and life are not thereby in the least affected. What do your profession and your conduct say to your Maker—what to your Savior? This. “Lord I believe that Thou hast given me existence and every blessing, but *my life* shall not acknowledge it. I believe that I owe Thee every thing—I will give Thee nothing.”

“Thou suffering Savior, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Savior of the world, and a Savior offered to me, but I will not have Thee as such. I believe that Thou hast a righteous claim to my heart and life, but I will give Thee neither. I believe Thou art altogether lovely, but I will never love Thee. I

believe it was Thy dying desire to save my soul from perdition, but in spite of Thy dying love and offered life, my soul shall perish."

Tell me, reader, is not this cool insult to the gospel and to its Author? And do you believe God will take you to heaven for this? If not, then such a faith, being thus without works, is dead.

3. Such *faith is utterly abominable to God and to Jesus Christ*. Who does not see this? The times of former ignorance God might wink at, but the heaven-provoking sin of those that know God and yet by works deny Him must be the loathing of Infinite Purity. This sin lifts up its hard front before God and admits every truth, but plants itself on a flat refusal of all the requisite homage, love, and service. If this is not rebellion, what is? If this is not daring Jehovah's power and vengeance, what is? If this does not grieve his heart of love, and exhaust his long-suffering, past endurance, what can?

4. Faith *without works, fails utterly of answering the great ends of gospel faith, namely, to sanctify the soul and fit it for heaven.*

Christ reveals Himself as a Savior "to save his people from their sins." He expects that faith will "work by love," and purify the heart, and "overcome the world." True faith in its legitimate influence will and must do this. This Christ desires. He wants his people "to behold as in a glass his glories, and thus be changed into the same image from glory to glory." And having thus walked by faith and loved Him though unseen, they are prepared to hail the day when they shall "see Him as He is."

But faith without works does not even begin to mold the *soul* into the image of Christ and heaven. No. It hardens the heart and kills all its moral sensibilities, for it accustoms the mind to see Christ's beauty and his claims, and resist both. This is the spirit of the damned. Faith

without works nurtures this spirit. What wonder, then, that it should shut the soul from heaven, and send it to its "own place?"

Such is all faith which is without works. Professed Christian, think of thine! Does it "work by love," and constrain your very soul to renounce sin with utter loathing, and follow hard after Christ? Would to God it were always thus! I can not repress the grief and anguish of my soul as I think how much professed faith in the church is a solemn mockery of God, a base and cruel insult of his Son. *Reader,*
WHAT IS THINE?

CHAPTER XVII.

SUSTAINING GRACE THROUGH FAITH.

“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” 1 *Peter* : 1 : 5.

THE reader will recollect with pleasure and profit that these are the words of Peter. Peter, the same who was once so self-confident and of course so weak ; the same who once stumbled so grievously, but Christ prayed for him so that his faith failed not utterly—this man is spared and strengthened of God to bear his testimony to this glorious truth, that Christians may be “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” Ah, he had had experience. This truth became to him in his latter days a blessed reality. He learned to

know the arm that upholds, as he had also known most bitterly the absence of its aid. He had also known the faith through which this sustaining grace is made effectual. No wonder then that his views are so clear, and his language so precise and perfect.

In this passage as in some others of the divine book of wonders, every word seems emphatic—yes, more than emphatic—freighted with truth more precious than gold of Ophir.

“Kept.” Let the christian reader pause upon this word. God’s people are *kept*. They are kept as in a walled town, (so the original word means,) so that no harm can reach them. They are kept as the shepherd keeps his flock from the storms, or from ferocious wolves. They are kept as a strong man keeps his family and his treasures in his castle. Yes, God has walled the Christian in, so that under divine protection and in the exercise of faith, no spiritual foe can overpower him. Or

to express the idea in the language of an eminent saint ; “ The name of the Lord is a strong tower ; the righteous runneth into it and is safe.” “ Truly God is a refuge for us, a very present help in trouble.”

And now, Christian reader, have you ever had conflicts ? Have you ever seen foes ? And has your heart quailed in apprehension of danger ? Then let me show you the castle. The name of the Lord is a strong tower. By the power of God you may *be kept*, and no assault of Satan or of Satan’s legions can destroy you, or need alarm you.

But you are kept “ by the *power of God*.” Let not this be overlooked. The power that gives security and victory is not of your own arm. No. That walled tower is the name of the Lord. It is his arm around his people that sustains them and repels their foes. It is his look of love that makes them strong in the Lord.

And you are kept “ *through faith*.” Let it not be supposed that you have nothing

to do, no agency to exert in this being preserved through the field of battle unto final salvation. Far otherwise.—The power of God which keeps you is available only through faith. And this is not an arbitrary but a perfectly rational and naturally indispensable means of accomplishing the end. For, be it remembered, the great thing to be feared and resisted is sin, and your own sin. That is, the danger is that you yourself will fall under temptation, forget God, lose sight of Christ, and let worldly and selfish considerations gain the ascendancy over your heart. How shall the threatened evil be averted and your heart be preserved? God deals with you as if you were a rational, moral being. He expects to save you, if at all, by means of truth presented to your mind and so believed by you as to exert its natural and legitimate influence upon the heart. That is to say, you are to be saved from sinning, *through faith*. Now it so happens that the things revealed in

the gospel concerning God, Christ, the way of salvation, yourself and your relations to God, are precisely such as are adapted to make you hate and loathe sin, and cleave with your whole soul unto God. The thing therefore which you need, is to *believe these things*—to hold them before your mind, and clasp them to your bosom as realities, so that you may feel their renewing power. “Beholding as in a glass the glory of Jesus, your Lord, you will be changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

The Christian reader doubtless knows something of this in his experience, even though he may never have studied its philosophy. Perhaps in some favored seasons the truth respecting Jesus has been so vivid and clear to your mind, and has seemed so like a reality to you that you could not think of any, even of the least sin, without actual shuddering. It seemed that you would rather die a thou-

sand deaths than even parley with a temptation to the least sin. Then you believed, and proved the efficacy of gospel faith. Then you were “kept by the power of God through faith.” For though the influence of truth is so natural, yet so mighty are the repellencies, so strong the counter influences that nothing effectual can ever result except through the Spirit of God.

Hence the necessity of both the means and the glorious Agent. Truth believed is the one—the Spirit of God the other. So the Bible; “kept by the power of God through faith.” And the Christian may thus be kept “*unto salvation.*” He is made sure of final victory. The salvation spoken of is ready to be revealed in the last time. God will at last bring him forth from the conflict and from the scenes of battle, washed and made white, fitted for the mansions of the blessed.

And now who would know the way of victory over the world and sin? Who

104 SUSTAINING GRACE THROUGH FAITH.

thirsts to secure the blessing? He that hath ears to hear let him hear. The secret lies in these words, "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

CHAPTER XVIII.

ABIDING IN CHRIST.

“ Abide in me and I in you.”—*John* 15: 4.

THE relation between Christ and his people is neither mysterious nor mystical: but it is marvelous, peculiar, and most precious. Infinite mischief comes of involving this subject in mysticism. It is in itself plain enough to be understood by all who have had experience of what it means. There is nothing in it or about it which accords not entirely with the great laws of our mental and spiritual being.

And yet the relation is truly marvelous. It is a matter of wonder, great and eternal, that Christ should condescend so low and unite Himself so intimately with

polluted beings. And it always seems marvelously strange to the Christian that one so vile as himself should share the love of a being so infinitely pure as Jesus.

But what is this relation? The text says "abide in me." The Christian then should be *in* Christ. Let the reader dwell on this singular expression. I call it singular, for where else do we find it existing? The parent loves his child, and does every thing he can do for its good; the relation between them is in many respects pre-eminently strong and precious; but who ever speaks of the parent as being *in* the child? Neither can this language be used of that most intimate and endearing of all human relations, which Christ so often employs to express his relation to his Church. There is, in short, no such relation among mortals as that which exists between Christ and those who love Him.

There is then peculiar emphasis in the expression, "in Christ." It implies,

1. Being *in his interests*. The Christian, united to Christ, is heart and soul in the interests of his Savior. He is dead to other and adverse interests, and alive to none but those of his Lord. Enough for himself that Jesus reigns, and that his will is done on earth and in heaven. Not reluctantly, but with more pleasure than he ever felt in any other cause, does he throw his soul into the cause of Jesus and identify himself with it so perfectly that he would know nothing else save Jesus Christ and him crucified. So attractive to him is the Savior's cause, and withal so meet and right does it seem to give his very all to it that he wonders how himself or others can ever love any thing else. Christian reader, do *you* know what this is? Do you feel thus to-day?

2. Being in Christ implies being *in his service*. If you are in Christ, you are serving him with all your heart and all your might. Perfectly preposterous is the very idea of being in Christ to get his

favor and his heaven, and at the same time being out of Him entirely as to doing any thing which He requires. The Bible recognizes no such love as this. "If ye love me," says Christ, "keep my commandments." And surely you will. Nothing is more certain than that if you love Christ, you will delight to do his commandments. Your whole soul will cry out within you, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

3. Being in Christ implies being in Him *by faith*; and by this I mean being in a trusting state of mind so that you depend on Christ continually for upholding grace. Then so depending on Christ by simple faith in his promises, he does uphold you, and you are in Him because thus upheld. His Spirit dwells within you. The character of Christ is present to your mind's eye, and the sense of it is weighty and sweet within your soul, so that it sways, softens, melts, transforms. The union of faith brings Christ near, infinitely near.

No language can adequately describe the energy and blessedness of this union. You love to trust, and Christ loves to be trusted. You love to receive and Christ loves to give. It is a union of giving and receiving; of love reciprocated; of confiding on your part, and helping on his. You lie in his arms and he bears you up and along. You say, "Lord I believe;" and Jesus smiles with most ineffable kindness as if the highest wish of his heart were gratified when a lost soul will trust his word and grace.

Christian reader, is this language to you unmeaning and strange? Is the thing now described, foreign from your experience? Then you have yet to learn Christ.

4. Being in Christ implies being *in his protection*. The soul thus united to Christ is safe as Christ is. For this great and good Shepherd would sooner be Himself torn in pieces by the wolves than leave his little lambs to such a fate, *while they*

crowd around Him for protection and really trust Him. Why not? How was it in fact when the case came to trial in the hour of terrible conflict, and some one must die? Did Christ give up the lambs of his fold, or Himself? So would He do again, if need be, for the protection of his trusting people. But no other "need be" can occur. Christ now proclaims of Himself, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Protection, then, to all those who are in Him, is sure and perfect.

5. Being in Christ is being *in the number of his redeemed ones.* For all such He died; and his death is availing to them because they believe in Him. The pardon is granted; the blood is accepted; the ransom is paid; the condemnation repealed finally and forever.

6. Being in Christ is being *within the scope of his intercessions.* For all such, Christ prays, and with most prevailing prayer. How precious is that specimen of this intercession which Christ so kind-

ly left us on record. How grateful the fact that in the hour of his own mightiest conflict, his heart did not forget his people, but seemed if possible more engrossed for their good than ever. All, therefore, who are in Christ, may safely lay themselves down in trust upon that sustaining grace which Christ's intercession procures.

“Abide in me, and I in you.” The counterpart of this text promises that Christ will abide in all those who themselves abide in Him. So he will, forever, and without fail. He lives within them. His Spirit makes their heart his temple. His presence surrounds them; invests them; and controls their moral being.

It implies his love; for how can Christ dwell with a soul which He cannot love? It implies communion. Nay rather, this is the very thing asserted.

The Bible employs various modes of illustrating this peculiar union. It is sometimes a feast. Christ knocks; you

open the door, and He comes in and sups with you and you with Him. Or Christ is the vine and you are the branches. While you abide in the vine, its vital juices flow into your soul naturally and abundantly, and your spiritual strength is sustained. Again, Christ says, "because I live, ye shall live also." As if the vital energies of our spiritual being were really identified with his, so far forth that while He lives and can, He will sustain us. And so it is. Such a union, how admirable—how glorious!

And does the Christian reader thirst for its blessings? He may have them all, to-day, henceforward, and forever.

CHAPTER XIX.

LOVE TO ENEMIES.

“Love your enemies.”—*Matt. 5: 44.*

THIS precept is one of the peculiar glories of the gospel. It belongs to no other system of morals. Search the records of Pagan Philosophy—it is not there. Go to the depths of ancient wisdom—it is not there. Ascend to the heights of the good morals, (so called) of civilized and christianized society, and it is not there. Explore the principles of the natural heart, and it is not there.

But in the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have it fully unfolded both by precept and example. Here we have it, a *new* lesson for every convert to learn. You

can not live long in a world like this without occasion for its practice. If God suffers you to pass along through the first months or years of your spiritual course without enemies, you may thank his kind providence. He knows how to "temper the wind to the shorn lamb." But God will doubtless put you in a school where you may carry your spiritual education on to perfection. Think it not strange therefore, if this should be given you among your more advanced lessons. You may expect it.

What does the precept mean? What does it not, and what does it enjoin?

I answer, 1. Not that we should love our enemies with complacency; for if their characters are bad, this is wrong; and if our hearts are right, it is impossible. 2. Not that we should approve their conduct; for if it be wrong, we neither can, nor ought to approve it. 3. Not that we should be wholly insensible under the wrongs we experience; for the

constitution which God has given us forbids it by making it naturally impossible. God asks us to control, not to eradicate the constitutional principles of our being. He can give us grace to rise above the suffering which wrong inflicts; and for this we will bless his name. 4. Not that we should in all cases bear the injuries done us in our person, reputation, property, &c., with no effort to prevent, alleviate, or remove them. For thus should we sometimes surrender ourselves to the mercy, or rather to the *malice* of the wicked, to our own real injury, and with no good to others. Yet be it never forgotten that the gospel law in regard to personal injuries requires us, at least, usually, to repel by meekly enduring; and to retaliate only by rendering good for evil. 5. Not that we should tamely suffer the interests of the community to be sacrificed. The law of loving our enemies can not require that we should cease to love our friends,

and the great interests of the whole community.

But the precept does enjoin. 1. The love of benevolence towards our enemies. It requires us to seek their best good most sincerely and earnestly. 2. Also, that we should keep our minds free from all prejudice, and judge as favorably of their motives and conduct as the circumstances of the case will possibly allow. 3. That we should be happy when we can put a favorable construction upon their conduct, and grieved when we cannot. 4. That when greatly wronged, we should cherish pity rather than indignation; that we should weep and pray over their depravity, blindness, or prejudice, rather than give way to resentment, contempt, or any unkindness. 5. That we should estimate as low as possible the injuries done to ourselves, and be careful never to exaggerate them. 6. That unless the manifest sacrifice of a higher good forbid it, we should meekly bear the injury, and

leave our defense with God, assured that He will take all needful care of all that He deems worth defending. 7. That we should never take vengeance on our enemies, remembering who hath said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." 8. That we should return only good for evil; according to that sweet law of love; "If thine enemy hunger, feed him."

Such, reader, is the gospel law of loving our enemies. It is enforced by the command and example of our blessed Lord. Think of that example; how full, how lovely, how precious! How does its aspect of meek forbearance and quenchless love look forth, like the smile of God, upon the strifes and heart-burnings of a warring world! "When he was reviled, he reviled not again." While the men of his nation were plotting his death, "he beheld the city and wept over it." While they drove the nails through his hands, he cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Do you admire this spirit? Then love and cherish it. Let it kindle and burn unquenched on the altar of your heart. It will shed the light of heaven through all your soul as it did in the soul of Jesus. It will diffuse the serene calm of peace unutterable. No man can then set on you to hurt you. His very attempt will call into exercise those affections which will fill your soul with heaven. The Spirit of God will be at home in your heart. How much soever men, even professedly Christian men, may cast out your name as evil, and exclude you from their sympathies and charities, you are sure of the communion of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Our Father above knows when and where to meet his children with his favor. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

Do you doubt the genuineness of your spiritual exercises? Love and pray for

your enemies—let your very soul go forth in most tender regard and earnest well-wishing, and fervent prayer for their good, and God will give you the witness of his Spirit, such as you need not question. These exercises are not selfishness under any, even of its most subtle forms.

Do you thirst for solid happiness, happiness of such a kind as the mightiest men cannot wrest away? Here you have it. *Love your enemies*; and nothing can by any means harm you. Love your enemies; and your joy no man taketh from you. It is substantially as sure as the joys of heaven.

CHAPTER XX.

STABILITY OF HEART.

“O God, my heart is fixed ; I will sing and give praise.”—*Ps.* 108 : 1.

SO said and sung the sweet Psalmist of old, and thus he led the devotions of the thousands of Israel, pouring forth the fullness of his soul and giving utterance to his settled purpose of heart to trust and praise Jehovah alone. Let others, thought he, trust in an arm of flesh : my trust is in the name of the Lord. Let others go to seek help from gods of wood and of stone, or from any more mysterious things of their own vain imagining : “I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people ; I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.” Let men of

the world chase their senseless vanities, vacillating forever among the delusive objects of their trust, or between their all and God; my heart is fixed, I seek not their gold or pomp or power—for *God is mine*. “I will sing and give praise.”—God is my refuge and strength—a very present help in trouble. I have made him my portion. I seek all my good in Him. My mind is now settled. I have chosen God. My soul rests down on Him. For me it is enough that He is mine.

So, reader, let it be with thee. Let thy soul part company forever with every earthly love and earthly helper, and settle down upon God alone. Turn with loathing from the enchanting attractions of things below; bid them away from your heart and your eye forever, and look to God. Cease to fluctuate between these tempting objects of earthly affection, and that High and Holy One. O, cease, I say, for why should you both grieve and

insult Jehovah by saying in your daily action that a toy on earth is worth more than his favor in heaven, or that some bauble of an hour is more precious than his offered crown of immortality. Then let the proud, and the covetous, and the sensual, have their gods and all the reward they give ; but let your soul be fixed on another portion. Let others praise the shining emptiness, the showy nothing which selfish men love and seek ; but let your soul praise the Lord alone. Make Him your God. Repose your heart in Him as your Infinite Father. Let there penetrate through all your moral being, the choice,—the accepting of Him as your portion, your trust, your almighty friend, your *all*.

So felt the pious monarch of Israel,—and with how much reason ! How wise the choice ! How noble and right this fixed and sublime purpose ! For his God had built the heavens. On earth, he ruled over all, and could cast down the lofty

from their thrones—could “sustain or sink the distant poles.” And he had shown himself mighty to save his friends and crush his foes. David from his youth had known Jehovah, his friend, his trust, his Savior. And on such a God, should not his soul be *fixed*?

He had also read and seen other developments of Jehovah’s character, and he doubtless apprehended it as *in itself*, glorious, lovely, great, good, perfect, all-attractive, enough to command his soul away from all created good. Is it strange then, that he should break out; “O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise?”

Then why not we, much more—we who have seen Jesus! we who have read his story, and stood amazed at his condescension;—we who have been overwhelmed and melted before his cross. Of all this, David had seen a little in dim prophetic vision; yet compared with what we see, how little! O, had he

known all we know; had his eye seen as we may see them, the milder, heaven-beaming glories of his greater Son, how would his harp have caught the strain of angels, and poured its numbers full and long! How would his powers of song have been fixed on Jesus, as if he could never speak or sing of any thing else! With what emphasis of a bursting heart, would he have said; "O Jesus, now my heart is fixed; unto thee will I sing and give praise—to thee—to thee alone and forever. Such love as thine has chained my heart to thee; it may not, shall not, must not wander more.

But reader, where art thou? Is thy heart in this thing? Does thy soul burn within thee with quenchless aspirations after Christ? Does it break forth in glowing praises? Is it *fixed*, fixed as if bound with ten thousand cords that can never be sundered? Where are thy thoughts, and what are the objects of thy seeking? Whither tend the aspirations of thy

heart? towards God and this blessed Savior; or downwards towards earthly things? Will you pause, just here, long enough to settle this question,—long enough to bring your soul to the touchstone of the Psalmist's spirit, and know whether you do truly sympathize with Him or not? For know thou, most assuredly, that heaven is for those whose hearts are thus fixed and preparing, and for none others.

CHAPTER XXI.

MANY DECEIVED.

“Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you : depart from me ye that work iniquity.”—*Matt. 7 : 22, 23.*

THE great fact revealed here from the lips of Christ, is not merely that many shall fail of heaven, but that *many of those who expected to go there*, shall fail—being bidden to depart as workers of iniquity. Such a declaration from the great Judge Himself, were enough, surely, to attract attention, and awaken solicitude in every

heart that cherishes a hope of heaven. Is it a well attested fact that many of this class shall certainly be disappointed? Does the declaration come from one who knows what men are—from one who understands the principles on which the final decision shall be made? Has the great Judge Himself said so? Then He meant to warn the church to some purpose, while the warning could reach and save the unhappy victims of delusion. His heart of love was pained to agony in view of the myriads, gone, going, and to go in the broad road to death, with the cherished hope of heaven. He saw that then, as ever since, and now, a multitude professed religion without possessing it. The hypocritical pretender, he abhorred; —the self-deceived, he pitied; and therefore, for the good of both, He uttered this plain and pungent truth;—"Many in that day shall say, Lord, Lord, whom I must bid depart, for I never knew them."

Nor let this great fact seem to the reader, strange. To-day compare the mass of Christians with the Bible standard of Christian character, and the truth in the text would be manifest enough, if Christ had never said it.

1. See how little the gospel has done for a multitude of professors to mold their hearts, and shape their lives. Do they breathe its spirit of heaven-born love, and good-will to man? Have they that "charity," so graphically painted by St. Paul, 1 Cor. 13? Are they dead to the world, dead to covetousness, envy, ambition, selfishness; and all alive to God—to piety—to Christ's kingdom—to human well-being? From the abundance of their heart does their mouth speak, and speaking, show that the love of Christ reigns sweetly within, and brings every thought into captivity to itself? Reader, look upon thyself, and ask how it is *at home*.

And ask we for the *life* also—the living development of the inner man in action?

And what are a multitude of professed Christians doing — what for God—for Christ—for the progress of holiness—for the conversion of sinners—for the high, eternal good of man? What, to deny themselves, subdue their appetites, to slay their lusts, to “live soberly, righteously, and godly in this evil world?” Where are the men of prayer, the men of bright and burning example, the men whose lives speak forth for God, and testify to the change which the gospel has wrought? There *are* such—but such are not all. Take these away, and there are many left. These are the “many” of whom Christ speaks in the text. Reader, of this many, *art thou one?*

Whatever else on this subject may be dark or doubtful, it is certain that the gospel, where it really works, does greatly change both the heart and the life. It is also certain that its fruit is not so like the natural fruit of depravity and selfishness, that it cannot be distinguished. And it is

just as certain as the word of God can make it, that this gospel change must occur and this fruit of love and holiness must appear *on earth*, or the soul never sees heaven.

2. See how averse many who profess religion are to self-examination, and how little they know of themselves.

They hear sermons on the subject, and apply them most carefully—to their neighbors. On the eve of the Lord's supper, conscience presses them to self-examination; but the task is hasty, superficial, fruitless. They rarely mark the workings of their own minds. They do not ask themselves for the ruling motives of their daily conduct. They are strangers to their own hearts. Is it marvelous that they should go to hell "with a lie in their right hand?"

3. See how commonly, when they attempt to question their own supposed piety, they judge themselves by false standards.

One asks only for joy. If he enjoys himself, all is well. Another counts and

measures his prayers, and if they seem to amount to the requisite evidence, he is satisfied. A third knows that his name stands fair on the records of the church, an heir of the "covenanted mercy."—This suffices for him. And many, very many go to the seventh chapter of Romans, and find a conflict described there, in which sin is victorious, and brings the soul "into captivity." Assuming that this is Christian experience, and knowing it to be their own, they feel safe enough of heaven.

Alas! alas! how many ways has Satan to do his work. And none more effectual than the perversion of the Bible. With all ease and certainty is the work of ruin done by adopting a false standard of Christian character, and wresting the Bible for its support.

Reader, we are going to the bar of Christ. You will not forget the fact that many, *many* who expected heaven will then be bidden to depart from Christ, *forever lost!*

CHAPTER XXII.

HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST.

“Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren.”—*Heb. 2: 17.*

HAS the reader been wont, like Paul, to “count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus?” And like Him have you solemnly determined to “know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified?” Then you are certain to feel a thrilling interest in every development of that blessed character; and under the teachings of the Divine Spirit, you will doubtless learn of Christ both rapidly and rightly. But there are many, professedly in the school of Christ, whose views of Him still remain exceedingly dim and vague,

and whose progress is dull, if not doubtful. In the hope that the latter class may be greatly benefitted, and the former really so, this subject is now taken up. I will introduce it by suggesting two considerations ; one, pertaining to what Christ is, and the other to a mode of apprehending his character.

1. Christ is none the less really and perfectly a *man*, because his human nature is united with the Divine, and none the less really Divine, because the God dwelt in human flesh. The union is indeed perfectly mysterious; yet the Bible teaches fully enough that in this union there is no loss or relinquishment of any of the essential qualities of either the man or the God.

2. Our conceptions of complex objects are often greatly assisted by contemplating their component parts separately. Thus we may contemplate Jesus Christ, first as truly man, and then as really God. In the former view, we need not suppose

Him man only, but we will suppose Him to be man really and perfectly. And so in our contemplation of his divine nature.

Christ, then, *on earth was really man*. In the light of this great truth, we may profitably contemplate the following facts.

1. *He obeyed the divine law perfectly.* He did the very thing in this respect which we are required to do. We have then in Him a full development of what perfect obedience to God's law is. We see also how lovely a character entire obedience to God's law produces. O how lovely! How like heaven would this world be, if men were once to obey God's law as Christ did!

2. *Christ left an example for us.* This example He left us as man. An angel's example made known ever so fully would profit us comparatively little—his circumstances are so unlike ours. But here is a man—a *real man*; suffering, yet patient; tried, yet through faith and prayer

sustained ;—tempted, and that too, “in all points like as we are,” yet by the word of God, the sword of the Spirit, victorious in every assault. Yes, there is the man, Christ Jesus, weary at noon-tide by the well, yet toiling on in his Master’s work; bereft of friends, and pouring out his sympathies—the tribute of a common humanity—yet sinning not by one repining thought. That is the man, Christ Jesus. His example is left for me, and, reader, for you. Do not imagine that it lies above the sphere of humanity, that so you may disburden your conscience of all obligation to follow, and even attain it. Rather let this example lie in your view just where He left it, “who suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.”—1 *Pet.* 2: 21.

3. He *voluntarily endured for us the wrath of God and the agonies of the cross.* Yes, the man, Christ, bore all this. It pleased the Father to bruise Him, and to hide from Him his face. In the hour of

most piercing torture, and of thickest horrors, the man, our brother, cried aloud, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And all this, the man, Christ Jesus, of his own will, consented to suffer. True, in the deep agonies of anticipation, the throes of human nature are seen; for He cries "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," but then in sweet resignation, He adds, "Father, not my will, but thine be done." Still He stands a voluntary victim.

And is that sufferer, a man, a fellow-being, one of our own species, a sympathizing friend, a gracious benefactor?—Yes, and He threw Himself between our guilty souls, and God's avenging sword, and took the blow Himself. "He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows."

4. God, *the infinite Father*, loved and approved the spirit which the SAVIOR manifested throughout this scene. We might also say that God, the Father, loved his eternal, co-equal Son for his part in coming down into mysterious but self-denying,

self-emptying union with the man, Jesus. It is true that the Father loved both. The whole transaction was a scene of God-like benevolence. We can scarcely conceive how the heart of God, the Father, flowed forth in complacency and love towards the spirit then and there manifested. God will certainly show that He esteems and loves that spirit. He will make his approbation of it so plain that the universe shall see it.

5. God will *infinitely reward the man, Christ Jesus, for his benevolent sufferings endured for the salvation of his fellow-beings*. God will give Him to see of the travail of his soul, so that He shall be satisfied. The joy set before Him, He shall surely have. The covenant is that He shall have a seed to serve Him, a multitude that no man can number, who shall wash their robes, and make them white in his blood. These are the reward of all his pains. They are his brethren, plucked from ruin, and raised along

with Him in his exaltation in union with the eternal Son “to sit down with Him, on his throne,” and be “joint heirs” with Him of God, and of his eternal glories. Wonderful! a world of wonders—and all wonders of love: all right, yet gracious towards the suffering Savior, but all, all of grace unmerited towards us. That we should be raised with Jesus to inherit God—to have Him our eternal portion, is grace that wants more than language to describe it.

Well, there is one consoling thought under this overwhelming weight of glory. It is that Christ shall wear the crown, and we his people be the gems that sparkle in it, not for our glory but for his. It is that Christ and God shall be the theme of that song, and we will raise and swell it long and loud before the universe of created minds, so that they all shall know what love and grace have done.

6. As man, *Christ has perfect sympathy with his people.* This is not the love that angels may have for us; nor such as God

bears to us; but it is real sympathy.—“ Having Himself suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.” He knows how man feels under the infirmities and trials of this mortal state. Reader, you have your little portion of trials: perhaps you deem it large and heavy, and look around you for sympathy. Now if your sufferings and trials are brought on you by your sins, Christ can feel compassion for you: if they are of that class which come upon you *as man*, a partaker of *humanity*, in a world of temptation, then Christ has perfect sympathy with you; for He has felt them all. And as if to annihilate for ever your unbelief, He consented to experience all these temptations, and endure all these sorrows, so that you might know assuredly that He understands them, and can feel for you as any other man could feel for you who had passed through the same scenes of anguish or trial as yourself. What inimitable tenderness is there in this mode

of rebuking our unbelief! Christ seems to say, “banish your doubts of me, and know that my heart can and does sympathize with you; for see, I have been through that very pathway of temptation, toil, or anguish, myself. Reader, can you discredit such testimony? Will not at least *your heart* give its assent?

And this is the man, Christ Jesus. His sympathies are like those of man for his fellow-man. He is a brother—elder to be sure—“the first-born among many brethren”—first in dignity, first in power, yea, far indeed, very far, the first—yet still none the less a brother—none the less full of tender, condescending sympathy. O! we will love and trust!

7. The reader may contemplate the *exaltation to which human nature is raised in the person of Christ*. That one man of our race, how infinitely exalted! How the mind falters in the grasp of a thought so grand! How we stand amazed at the mysterious plan of God in thus taking

hold not of angels, but of lost, degraded man, to lift him up into fellowship with Himself!

8. Connected with this is the *glory* to which Christ will raise his people as his brethren. But here I know not what to say. The Bible has said a little, but its language seems to express almost too much for even infinite love and condescension to do. It speaks of our being “joint heirs with Christ” of God Himself, and of our “sitting down with Christ on his throne, even as He overcame, and is set down with his Father on his throne.” And it says also—what is most obviously true—that it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is.”

Now, reader, let us say—this is enough. Enough it must be to be like Christ, and be for ever with Him, and see Him as He is. And will He own us as his brethren, then and there? Oh! is it possible that

He can and will! And shall I meanly, and wickedly disown and dishonor Him here? Let me sink down at his feet—yes, now—and pour out my heart in tears of grief, and agony, and shame.—Alas I have sinned! I would be forgiven for this sin—but infinitely more would I be so renewed and so kept by his grace as never to dishonor and disown Him more. So help me Jesus.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DIVINE NATURE OF CHRIST.

“Thomas said unto Him, my Lord and my God.”
—*John* 20: 28.

THIS passage teaches us that Christ's disciples were taught by Himself and his Spirit to regard Jesus not only as man but also as God. It was a blessed moment in the life of Thomas when his unbelief vanished away, and his soul settled back into its wonted confidence in Jesus, or rather seemed to rush forth with augmented ardor, faith, and love, to fall at the feet of his Lord and his God. There seems to have been in his mind a peculiarly fresh apprehension of Christ in his divine nature. And no wonder this view of his Lord should melt

his soul. It is to all believers an exhaustless source of confidence and joy. When I contemplate Christ as truly God I see,

I. *That He has power enough to accomplish all his work.* The resources of God are absolutely boundless. They can never fail. They can never fall short in efficiency for any designed result.—More particularly in the divine nature of Christ I see,

1. *The infinite merit of his atonement.* And here, we need not assume that the God suffered on the cross, or even miraculously sustained the man Jesus, so that He could and did suffer infinitely. The Father does not ask infinite sufferings in order to make an unlimited atonement. In his view, the value of the atonement does not turn on the amount of pain endured; for benevolence does not demand pain for its own sake, or as a good in itself, and much less, for malicious gratification. No such thing. God requires an atonement only because He must sup-

port his throne, and for this end must show his abhorrence of sin, and determination to punish it. This He could show only by inflicting pain somewhere. In his suffering Son, He has shown it, and shown it perfectly. For, ask the angels on high what they thought when they saw that person, the God and the man Christ Jesus, in the agonies of death. Ask them what impression was made on them when Jesus rose and took his seat at the right hand of the Father with the prints of the nails still fresh in his crucified hands and feet, and the marks of the thorns still visible on his insulted brow. O then they knew that "it pleased the Father to bruise Him, and to put Him to grief," because He "bore our griefs" and stood in our stead. And if God spared not his own Son, they see that He will not spare the sinner, that his soul abhors sin, and that his throne is firm and safe forever.

They rejoice in such an atonement. So do I. I know it is perfect. It an-

swers every demand which the great interests of government can make. It shows God to be just, while yet He justifies the sinner. It opens wide the door for infinite benevolence to pardon and to save.

2. Again, I see in *Christ's divine nature, one qualification for a perfect Mediator*. In the man, Christ Jesus, I see that we have perfect sympathy. He comes down to us to know our griefs, and feel Himself our trials. Then He will be interested for us, and will do all He can in our behalf while He stands before the throne.

But has He *power* to prevail? Can He gain access and have influence at the central court of the universe, before the King of the highest heavens? O yes; for He is the *King's Son*. Himself is God, of equal power and glory with the Father, and has his seat at the right hand of the Eternal One.

And have I *such a Mediator*? Then indeed I may "come boldly to the throne

of grace to obtain mercy and find grace for seasonable help." I have nothing to fear and every thing to hope. The Mighty One of the universe is my friend and advocate. What then, can I want?

3. From Christ's divine nature I derive another precious truth; *Jesus can now be ever and always present with each, and with all of his people.*

This were a dark world if we could not see Jesus. True enough, we should be orphans, if Christ had not made provisions for revealing Himself to us through the Comforter. But He has kindly done this. How wonderfully did He anticipate our wants! Now, He can be wherever two or three are gathered in his name; yes, wherever there is one soul that seeks his face. And while I rejoice in his presence, not less blessed than if I were leaning, like the "beloved disciple," on his bosom, I now have the additional joy of knowing that a thousand times ten thousand other saints on earth, may be enjoying the very

same presence, feasting on the same smiles of love, and holding precious communion with the same blessed, soul-sustaining Spirit of Jesus. The sweetness of such a thought is like heaven.

4. In view of the divine nature of Christ, I see that He must have *power enough to save his people from all sin.*

It is to my mind but partial, I might almost say, poor consolation if pardon is all I can have from an offered Savior. I want infinitely more than this—I want *deliverance from sin.* I want to love my Savior with all my heart, and to honor Him in all my life. I want to be so drawn, so kept, so molded and so melted, that the spirit of heaven shall breathe through all my soul, and the spirit of sin and selfishness never pollute it again, no more at all, forever. My soul longs to honor Christ. I would never be satisfied except I am doing the utmost I can to please Him and praise Him, and make his glories known on earth and in heaven. These are solid

wants. Nothing will supply them but the very blessing sought.

And do I ask too much? Does it savor of ingratitude for pardon and for the hope of being pure in heaven, that I ask for real holiness now with unutterable longing and with an importunity that will not take denial? By no means. It is *because* I would be grateful for pardon and a little salvation that I beseech my Lord to make his work in my soul perfect. I can not bear to dishonor Him again. O! I can not endure that one thought or feeling of my heart should ever again displease Jesus. Why should I?

Do I ask too much for Jesus to give? Is his power adequate, or not, to save me from all sin? Can He bless me by turning me from all iniquity?

Here I turn with joy and peace to the great truth that *Christ is God*. For in it I find an assurance that all my wants may be supplied. Do temptations from without surround me and put my soul in peril?

Are the world and the devil bent on my ruin? I may look to Jesus. If Satan desires to have me, He can save. If the world ensnare, He can, with every temptation, provide a way of escape; for He is Lord of all.

Or do temptations from within allure me? Yes, they do; and I want some all-controlling interest that shall absorb the powers of my being and use them up in the love and service of God so that they can not be perverted to sin and selfishness. I need Jesus so present with my soul, so abiding in it, that temptation to sin shall have no overcoming power. Let Jesus fill my soul with love to Himself, and the love of my own self will cease to rule. And He *can do it*. There is truth enough revealed in the gospel, and this truth is so adapted as to have power enough on any mind if it be only believed, apprehended fully, and made vivid and mighty on the soul by the Holy Spirit. According to the promise, (Ez. 36: 25—

27,) when God shall write his law on your heart, and “put his Spirit within you, He will *cause* you to walk in his statutes, and and you shall keep his judgments and do them.” “He will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will He cleanse you.”

Now none but God can do this; and God can do it. Jesus is God. He therefore can do it. The work is his, and He may be trusted to perform it. The influence which sanctifies in part need only be augmented, and it will sanctify wholly. And who will suppose that the reason why Christ can give no more, is lack of power, or of resources? This were to make Him no God.

But perhaps you doubt his willingness. You suggest that the vital question is—Does Christ really desire to have his people freed from all sin while yet they live on earth? And is it, then, a question, whether Christ wants his people to be

holy—wants them to love Himself with all their heart—wants them to refrain from insulting and abusing their Lord and destroying his cause—wants them, in short, to be a bride for Himself, adorned in all the beauties of holiness? Is it indeed doubtful whether Jesus loves holiness, and whether he is a God of love, and really seeks the best good of his people? Or does He know that some sin is better in the present state than too much holiness? Then why did He not tell us so? Why tell us that “This is the will of God, even your sanctification;” and why pray Himself for it; and why allure us upward and onward to it with all his might, by his “exceeding great and precious promises,” and his own perfect example? * * * But I forbear. I must be allowed to believe that Jesus came to save His people from their sins, and that nothing in his people pleases Him at all except the holiness they have. Of course his work is to aug-

ment this holiness to the utmost possible extent. Nothing that is possible is too much for us to seek and expect, or too much for Him to give with all his soul.

Now this is gospel. I can understand why the angels should hail this as Heaven's boon of "peace on earth and good will to men." It answers the description. It is worth something to be made pure from sin, and to have the victory over the world and temptation. It gives real peace. That God should give it to polluted rebels is the highest possible expression of his good will to men. O, this is salvation that has a meaning. Now I can understand why it is said: "Unto you that believe He is precious."

II. *My views of Jesus as God, blend my love and attachment to Him as man, with adoration, reverence, and praise.*

Suppose I had been one of his disciples on earth. At first and for a time, I apprehend Him only as man. But I am ravished with the excellence of his char-

acter. Every thing is so sweet, so right, so mild, condescending, pure, so like heaven—I can but love Him with all my soul. At length He lets his robe hang more loosely, and finally it falls off, and I see, unveiled, **THE GOD**. Still all is lovely as before; but there is blended with it whatever is great, majestic, God-like. I sink at his feet to adore and praise. I can find no words to express my joy that God is such a being as I behold in Jesus Christ. Now, at the same instant, I love Him as man, and I adore and worship Him as God. I love to give Him all my glory and cast my crown at his feet. No tongue can tell my joy and peace in such a Savior.

Need I speak of the wonderful and yet blessed relation into which I am thus brought to the infinite God—the man Jesus being my elder brother, and yet the man, Jesus, eternally united with the great Jehovah? And am I to be with Christ an heir, yea, a “joint heir” of the High and

lofty One that inhabiteth eternity? *

* * Well, "it doth not appear what we shall be." There will doubtless be enough of glory for a worm of earth to sustain. * * *

O! if we could only praise Him enough!

III. *Jesus, seen as God, appears in the aspect of the Lord of this lower creation.*

"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made." "He is God over all, blessed forever." And how should my soul exult in this? Now I know that nothing can by any means reach me with harm beyond his permission. Now I see Jesus, my best beloved, all round me, in the works and wonders of nature. It is He that wields the thunder and holds the tempest in his grasp. The sunshine is his smile, and the rain the dropping of his love. The fresh green of spring is his carpet of beauty, and the singing of birds is his choir of praise—a little effusion from his heart of love, and a little specimen of

the sweet praises of heaven. So I may have other means of holding communion with Jesus, besides both his word and his precious, indwelling Spirit. He has taken me into his garden to study its beauties and the skill and love of its author, and then bids all the fragrance of its spices flow out to regale me. O! this is Jesus!

IV. Once more, viewing Jesus as God, *I see Him to be also Moral Governor.*

I know Him now as *Lord*. Who has not been struck with the fact that the Apostles almost invariably speak of Jesus by this title. They seem to have taken special pleasure in recognizing Him as their rightful King, and in yielding Him the whole homage of their hearts and lives. And well they might be happy to render to One so lovely, the homage which is due to the great God, and the great King of all. My moral nature demands that I should reverence and obey the King who made the universe and myself, and who ever sustains and blesses all.

I am thankful for such a moral nature—for one that will demand this, and be satisfied with nothing less. And may I not rejoice exceedingly that Jesus has coupled duty with delight; yea, has blended them both in eternal harmony by revealing his love till my soul is ravished, and then by showing me that Himself is God, and that I may give Him the homage and obedience due from a creature to the Infinite Creator?

Reader, when you have robbed Christ of his divinity, what gospel have you left? But when on the contrary, you receive Him as both a perfect man and a perfect God, what a constellation of beauties and glories does the gospel become!

CHAPTER XXIV.

REMEMBRANCE OF CHRIST.

“This do in remembrance of me.”—*Luke 22: 19.*

THE scenes of personal communion and fellowship between our Lord and his disciples, were about to close. Precious had they been in the enjoyment, and most useful also they might be in the recollection. Other disciples, in the long line of generations down to the end of time, might be blessed by the same memorial.

Our Savior clearly foresaw that by the great mass of those for whom He died, his name would be forgotten. Was it strange that He should wish to be remembered by the few who loved Him? Hence He gave them the ordinance of the Holy

Supper, and bade them observe it in remembrance of Him, till He should come again to take the last generation of his people to his upper, better home.

Such is the command. It breathes no other spirit than that of love. Obedience, prompt, grateful and constant, seems so perfectly spontaneous, that I marvel how any Christian can ever feel or act otherwise.

The pierced and bleeding form of the sufferer of Calvary is before me. My sins have pierced Him; and yet his look is love, and not rebuke nor repulsion. He asks me if I will remember Him. He says, "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me."

Blessed Lord Jesus, we will remember thee as thou hast said. We can not forget where we were, and what we were, when thou didst come to seek and save us. An eternal death of horrors was before us. Then thou didst come to save. We can not forget the rescue.

We will remember also, the love that moved Him to come and make the sacrifice of blood and life for our salvation. It was such love as man had never seen—such as no mortal tongue can describe. It may not be forgotten.

We will remember the *design* which Jesus had in view. It was no other than that of redeeming a world of sinners from sin to holiness. He meant to make salvation possible to all who might ever hear of its glad tidings. And He meant, in fact, to secure the salvation of a great multitude that no man can number, out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation. Salvation, the salvation of the lost, was the great purpose which filled his soul and fired his heart, and bore Him through his agonies. And can we ever forget it? Shall we forget the world's Redeemer?

We will remember also the special design which Jesus had in regard to *us*. Did He die for me, for my very self, so that I

may have salvation? And what now does He want me to do? I hear it from inspired lips. "He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them." Ah, now I see, He asks me to remember that I am bought for Him. He wants me to aid in the great work of fulfilling his own plan of saving sinners. He kindly asks me to enter the field with Him, and be a laborer together with God and Christ and the Spirit, to save dying men from sin and hell. For this, in part, He gives me pardon. And I can not resist the call. I must obey. Jesus, I will remember thee. My heart and hand, my life, my all are thine.

Let us remember also, the power of Jesus to save from sin. Jesus, the heaven-derived name — why should not the sweetest associations cluster around it, and every fresh mention of it be a fresh assurance that Jesus can save his people from their sins? This is what we want.

It were a small thing to be saved only from hell. My soul cries out for more, infinitely more than this. It longs to be so pure as to grieve my Savior no more, so pure that henceforth I may only honor Him and do his pleasure. And is this possible? Is there truly "grace to help in every time of need," and strength that can "be made perfect" in my "weakness," and promises given, "exceeding great and precious, whereby we may become partakers of the divine nature, having overcome the corruption which is in the world through lust?" So the promises assert. So the name of Jesus leads me to expect. Then let me remember this in all my scenes of toil and trial. Let it be my strength and victory in all my temptations. Jesus is mine, and He can save.

A sinful world may forget its dying Lord, but how can we, who know his power, and his love? They may repay his death with scorn; but there are hearts

in which his name and deeds of love shall be cherished in everlasting remembrance. They who have seen his glory, and his beauty, and have felt the transforming energy of faith in his name, surely they will cherish his memory as if they could think of nothing else; and they will love his name as if it had swallowed up into itself all that is lovely in earth or heaven.

I said a sinful world might forget its dying Lord. Alas, some who profess to love Him, seem to be and do no better than they. It is but too plain that they love father or mother, wife or children, houses or lands, honors or lusts, more than Jesus. They must have forgotten Him. Perhaps they never knew Him. Assuredly his beauty has faded from their view, and they remember Him no more.

But there are those, blest Jesus, who do love thee, and whose remembrance of thee is rich with love and gratitude almost like heaven. They love to meet thee at

thy table—to live with thee by day and night—to have thy name embalmed in their memory, and all its recollections fraught with peace and love. O when shall their number, even on the earth, be a thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands?

CHAPTER XXV.

OFFICES OF THE SPIRIT.

“It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.”—*John* 16 : 7.

THE presence of Christ on earth among his chosen friends must have been intensely interesting and rich in spiritual profit. We see in the history how they hung on his lips and caught his gracious words, such as never man spake ; how they leaned on his bosom and were blessed by his sympathies ; how He loved his own that were in the world even to the end, and how they in turn, with broken, gushing heart, could say, “Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.” We may conceive also how the

new, or at least the more full development of the gospel fell on their ear—how they listened, astonished and joyful, to the doctrine of pardon to the believing, favor divine to the penitent, and salvation from sin, through God's Son and Spirit, to all who will come and receive it. Could any thing be more blessed than to hear the gospel from the lips of its great Author—than to receive pardon from the very hands of Him whose right it is to give it? Can any privilege or favor be greater than to receive spiritual blessings—peace hope, light, consolation—from the very person who could die to purchase and bestow them?

Yes. “It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go away, I will send Him unto you.” There is something better for the Christian here than the personal presence of Christ. Much as we should love that presence—and surely we should love it much, yea, ex-

ceedingly—yet is there something better for us than even that. This richer blessing is the *indwelling Spirit*.

But why is this better for us than Christ's presence was to the primitive disciples?

1. *He teaches more and better.* We would by no means disparage Christ. We do not. We give only his views on this point while we exalt the agency of the Spirit as a Teacher. "I have many things," said He to his disciples, "to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth shall come, He will guide you into all truth." "He will show you things to come." "He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." In the department of teaching his disciples, Christ left many things undone. For some reasons, He could not do it all. The Spirit followed Him and did it. His peculiar agency taught more truth than Christ did, and taught it more effectually. So the subsequent history of the disciples shows.

And though special inspiration has ceased, this Spirit is a Teacher still. Still does He teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance. He still makes us love the truth; enlightens by giving us the experience of its meaning and power, and divinely guides our understandings in our researches. Blessed Teacher!

2. *His sanctifying agency is more efficient.* We need not labor to explain how or why. The Bible exalts the work of the Spirit as a Sanctifier. The history of the primitive church shows how rapid, efficient, pervading, and heavenly, this agency can be. No one can read this history and compare it with that of the disciples when under Christ before the Spirit came, without observing the mightier agency of sanctifying grace under the Spirit's dispensation.

The words of Christ fell on the outward ear; his example met the eye; his persuasions in some degree, reached the

heart, yet not like his who *lives in the heart*—who works “in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure.” Not like his agency of whom it is said, “I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.” “Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you.” “Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them.” *The Deity within us—to purify our hearts!* What can be more precious, more glorious, more awful!

3. *The Spirit's agency is omnipresent.* Christ's personal presence was confined to a favored few. So it must have been. But the Spirit dwells in the hearts of all his willing people. The multitude of those that believe, how great soever it may be, can not exhaust his ability to be present with them all—just as really and as sweetly and efficiently present, as Christ could be with one, or with the chosen three on the holy mount, or in the garden scene of anguish.

Precious thought. I love to dwell on it. It adds to the joy of my communion with the Spirit to know that the same Spirit is pouring the same joys into the bosoms of ten thousand times ten thousand of his unworthy children, in many lands, and in every condition where hearts that love are found. The fullness of this joy, which fills the heart with delight because others without number are sharing it, is like the bliss of heaven. This the disciples had not in the personal presence of Christ. We have it in the communion of the Spirit.

Christian reader, is it true that we have a richer blessing offered us than Christ's own personal presence? Have you ever seen and prized it, and thanked the Savior for it? And does the church know it? Is she fully aware of it? Is she fully aware of the proffered presence of the Deity—the promised indwelling of her God in the hearts of her sons and daughters? If, like some earthly prince, Christ

were to pass through our land, how many churches assume that they would hail his coming, and rush forth to meet Him. Were He to come *they would not know Him*. For his Spirit does come, and they receive Him not. Perhaps they do not in form beseech "Him to depart out of their coasts," but *they grieve Him till He goes!* Alas! alas! When shall the indwelling presence and renewing power of the Spirit be prized and cherished as the richest gift of heaven!

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

“Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”—*Acts. 1: 5.*

THESE, as they were among the last, so were they among the best words ever uttered by Him whose lips were always full of grace and truth. They promised a great blessing soon to be bestowed upon the primitive church. And, *what was this blessing?* To this point I now ask the reader's attention. Having investigated this, we may come intelligently to the questions, *Is this blessing promised also to us?* and if so, *How may we obtain it?* To every Christian this whole subject is one of intense inter-

est. May every Christian reader appreciate it.

What blessings were promised to the primitive church in the baptism of the Holy Ghost?

I answer, 1. Negatively; not merely, nor chiefly, *miraculous gifts*. True, these were in their case included, for the obvious reason that then they were needed for particular use, as means of preaching the gospel. And especially they were needed to prove the presence and agency of the Holy Ghost. The world desired a sign. Christianity was to be established in the first instance by miracles. As Paul said, 1 Cor. 14: 22: "Tongues are for a sign. not to them that believe, but to them that believe not."

But these were only temporary appendages of the Spirit's baptism; not the great, the chief thing; not the essential element. For, be it considered, the disciples had miraculous power before, though somewhat less extensively. Again, Christ

taught them that these were comparatively of small consequence. Luke 10: 20: "In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

So also Paul taught most abundantly. See 1 Cor. 12—14. The main drift of these three chapters, is to show that miraculous gifts were of little worth, compared with other gifts imparted by the Spirit. In his view, the great fruit of the Spirit is love; and this he deemed above all price. This he held to be the true baptism of the Spirit, the greatest, best gift thereby conferred. Still farther, Christ taught much respecting what the Spirit should do. See John 14—16. Scarce any place, and no prominence is here given to miraculous gifts. The great work of the Spirit is to teach, reprove, comfort, and sanctify. But, finally, we have the testimony of history. We are permitted to study the subsequent lives of those who received the baptism of the

Holy Ghost, and see what its fruits actually were. And no man can do this candidly, without seeing something incomparably greater, and infinitely better than the gift of tongues. It is perfectly incredible that the baptism of the Holy Ghost should have meant only or chiefly this. No, Christian reader, it promised another blessing than this, better far, and more enduring.

2. This baptism was not the grace of conversion, or regeneration; for the Apostles were converted some years before. But God could make them yet far more holy, and for this was the Spirit given in holy baptisms.

If now we ask what blessings were actually and chiefly intended by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, we must seek the infallible answer from the Bible, and chiefly from prophetic descriptions of it, from Christ's representations, and from the history of its effects in the lives of primitive Christians.

For prophetic descriptions of it the reader may consult Isa. 44: 3—5, and 52: 14, and Ezek. 36: 25—27. Christ's instructions are found chiefly in John 14—16 chapters, and John 4: 10, 14, and 7: 37—39. If the reader will study these passages carefully, he will find very great stress laid upon the work of the Spirit as a teacher. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance." "He shall testify of Christ." "He shall glorify Christ," by revealing his truly glorious character to the mind and the heart of the believer. These passages also show that the Spirit shall reprove of sin, shall comfort the fearful, shall sanctify the heart, shall be a permanent, abundant, unfailing source of spiritual good. Reader, can you conceive any thing more precious than rivers of living water, and these too within you—flowing forth from your own soul, to bless others also? Do you ask for blessings more permanent

than “a well of water springing up into everlasting life?”

Will my readers now turn with me for a moment to a short but precious chapter in the history of true religion? We have it in the Acts of the Apostles. It is the history of the men who were baptized with the Holy Ghost. It will be remembered that at the time of their baptism, they were already Christians of a certain sort—that they had followed Christ with more or less of devotion, for some three years or more, and had apparently left all for his sake. Still they had many crude notions, great unbelief, and not a little fear of man. They were sanctified very partially. A mighty work remained to be wrought in their hearts. There is room for a change more striking than even that of their first conversion, and the Spirit of God can effect it. The Spirit comes. His sweet and mighty effusions are shed forth on them all. And what are they now? Their hearts are filled with love—yes, *filled*,

absolutely **FILLED** with love. This historian tells us often that they are of one accord, of one heart, and of one soul. See too what love they bear to Christ. Mark how they rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. See how, as on lightning's wing, they bear the story of his love to all nations. Note the love they manifest for a dying world. It would seem as if love had become their ruling passion ; and in some of its manifestations, towards their Savior, each other, lost sinners, or their enemies, it were bursting forth in mighty, ceaseless currents.

And where now is their former love of the world? What do they care henceforth for its favors or it frowns? What, for its honors? O, they have laid them down with all joy at their Savior's feet, and have taken up his cross for their crown of glory.

And how marvelously too have their fears vanished away. Where is he,—that

one among them—who, a few days ago, quailed before a servant-maid, and through fear of ill-treatment, forsook his Master and absolutely took his oath that he did not know Him? Yes, where is he? He is brought before that very Council which struck such terror through his soul but yesterday. Summoning all the dignity and majesty of a Jewish Sanhedrim, they fiercely interrogate him, to know by what power he is acting. And does he quail now? No. The historian tells us that Peter, “filled with the Holy Ghost,” made his defence fearlessly, preached to them the gospel of Jesus boldly, confounded them utterly, and finally left them with this resistless appeal to their consciences: “Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we can not but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” *Acts 4: 19, 20.* Such is one feature of the change wrought in a soul “filled with the Holy Ghost.”

Let it be noted also that this baptism of the Holy Ghost filled them with great spiritual joy. "They ate their meat with gladness." They rejoice under threats and torture, and under a nation's scorn: yea, even under the anguish of stripes and the peril of death. And is this nothing?

Let the reader mark also their "singleness of heart." They are no longer struggling to serve both God and Mammon. The question is not with them as with so many in the Church to-day—How much may we love and seek the honor and the wealth of the world, and yet not lose heaven? They have but one thing to do, and that is, to serve their Lord. This was the fruit of the Spirit's baptism.

It can not escape the attentive reader's notice that they were now prepared to preach Christ with amazing power and unparalleled success. No man, not even malignant enemies, could resist the wisdom and the power by which they spake. How sublime the spectacle of such power

over mind! And where lies the secret? Not in their learning—not in their native talents—not in the glory of their name—not in the fact that their hearers sympathize with the subject—no, in none of these things; but wholly in the fact that they are filled with the Holy Ghost. Their souls are glowing with love, and faith and truth. And God is with them. God is in them. Therefore is it that they can preach with resistless power. O! when shall arise some other such whose burning lips shall preach the truth of Christ, and make the proudest, mightiest sinners tremble? O, for a countless host!

Once more, let the reader remark that these effects of the Spirit were abiding. It was not the meteor's flash, that broke a moment on the vision, and sunk in thicker darkness. It was rather a summer's sun, that set not till it set in death. Those Christians held on their way, like the just man whose path is as the rising light. It is a lovely comment on the promise, "The

water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life ;” or that other, “ Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” The history of what was done by the primitive Church proves conclusively that through the baptism of the Holy Ghost, they were sustained in a course of unabated zeal, and faith, and love, and labor, as long as they lived. O, blessed agency !

Christian reader, have you not often sighed deeply over the fickleness of your best affections, the short duration of your holiest states ? Oh ! you need the original, the genuine baptism of the Holy Ghost. Ask yourself if this gift be not the very thing you need, and worth more to your soul than the Universe beside.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

“Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”—*Acts*, 1 : 5.

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive ; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given ; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.”) *John* 7 : 37—39.

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance : but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.”—*Mat.* 3 : 11.

IS this baptism of the Holy Spirit really promised to *us*—to all Christians in these latter days ? Presuming, that at least some of my readers are ready and

anxious to know the truth, the precious truth on this point, I hasten to suggest in proof that it is promised to us :

1. The fact that *this baptism of the Holy Spirit is the great promised blessing of the gospel dispensation*. The reader may consult Isaiah 44 : 3-5, and 52 : 15, and Ezek. 36 : 25-27 : where we read that Christ shall sprinkle many nations, and where the sprinkling of clean water which should really cleanse the soul is further explained by the language, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes," &c.

Or the reader may consider the texts, and similar passages. As the characteristic feature of John's work was, that he baptized with water ; so was it of Christ's, that He baptized with the Holy Ghost. And Christ has shown that the blessing was to be given in its mighty effusions, after He should have been glorified. This was the best time. The truth which the Spirit was to employ came out pre-emi-

nently in Christ's life, death, and resurrection. It was not developed before. Moreover, the Spirit was to be so given as would most honor Christ. When He ascended, He sent it down—the result of his mediation—the purchase of his blood. Thus Christ was honored. But the blessing belonged to the gospel dispensation. Of this dispensation it formed the peculiar glory. It therefore is promised with all its fullness to ourselves.

2. *The Holy Ghost was to supply the place of Christ's presence*; and we may safely infer, not for his disciples only, but for all Christians, with whom he promised to be present, “always, even to the end of the world.” Christ makes his presence manifest now through the Holy Spirit. This Spirit, said Christ, “shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you.”

3. The special baptism of the Holy Ghost on the primitive Church was evidently designed to be *the first fruits of*

the gospel dispensation; not the whole of it—not the *least* effusion of glorious blessings—but a sample, a specimen, an earnest of what the blessing always is, and of what God's people might henceforth pray for, and through the prayer of faith, expect. It was given, then, to raise our faith and expectation; not to tantalize and mock them. Who can believe that God held out at the head of the present dispensation, that grand, soul-quickenng display of the Holy Spirit's power, only to awaken unutterable longings, to be gratified nowhere again, short of Heaven? Who that is a father ever held out bread before a hungry child, but gave him only a stone?

4. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is only another name for the pre-eminently rich, and powerful effusions of the Spirit. Now the Spirit is promised in the New Testament, and by Christ Himself, as freely as any other blessing whatever. Those promises too, are made to *us*. Can any

thing be more free, more full, more universal? Read Luke 11: 9-13. See the image there drawn of the Infinite Father at his table, distributing the bread of life to his praying children. This bread is the Holy Spirit. And how is it promised? How is it given? O! dwell on the appeal to paternal tenderness, and bounty. Are you a parent, or a child? Then you know how bread is given to a hungry suppliant. Did you ever give your child a stone, or a serpent, when his little hand was stretched out, imploringly, for bread? Neither does God give you blank nothing, or the devil's agency, when you ask Him for the Holy Ghost. Did *you* ever go on the principle of starvation with your child—giving him only food enough to protract a groaning existence? And yet perhaps you expect this very thing from God. Possibly this is one of the doctrines of your theology, that God really and wisely (!) too, designs to give his Spirit only in such scanty measures as

shall leave the Christian to drag out a sort of Christian life more dead than alive, till at least near his dying hour! If such be your view, I beg you to *read the Bible and believe it.*

5. *The plan of salvation contemplates as its prime object, the sanctification of the Church; and relies on the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the great efficient power for accomplishing the work.* According to the Bible, Christ came “to save his people from their sins”—to “bless them by turning them from their iniquities.” “He loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.”—Eph. 5: 25–27. And this work is to be done mainly by the Spirit’s agency. Now the question is, are the promises of the Spirit made to me, and to you? And the question is answered. There can remain no room for doubt. Does God love holiness? Does

Christ?—and well enough, to give Himself for his Church, that He might sanctify and cleanse it? And now, it being known that the Spirit of God is the efficient power, and that it is really promised to some Christians; and the whole question being, whether it is promised also, now, to all, and really accessible to all; I trust there can be but one answer to the question. As much as God and Christ love to see us become holy, as much as they love to see accomplished that great end for which God gave his Son, and his Son gave his life—so much may I be assured, that they love to give this blessing, and when sought unto in faith, will give it, bountifully, everywhere, and always. Christian reader, let us lay down our doubts, and our unbelief, and take up a song of praise. And not that only; but let us come up to our great Father's table, and “ask that we may receive, that our joy may be full.”

But do you say, how shall I obtain this blessing? Go and *ask for it*. It was given to primitive Christians in fulfillment of the promise, in answer to prayer and to faith. See John 7 : 38, 39, and Acts 1 : 14. Yet again, hunger and thirst after it. God gives not blessings where they are not wanted. To do so would be almost throwing them away. It would be departing from the great principles of his administration with free agents. Ask, then, with real hungering, if you would receive.

And to do this, you must value and cherish the blessing more than life itself. It is worth more than your life—more than the whole universe besides. Some just estimate of its value you must have, before you will honor the Spirit, and gratefully receive his baptism.

Another point let me press. *You must sacrifice every thing else to get it*. I mean now just as I have said. I mean not merely that you must be willing to do

this—for if you stop there you will probably deceive yourself, and lose every thing. But actually *do it*. Bring all you have, and all you love, and lay all down at Jesus' feet, and tell Him you give Him all for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then let Him give back to you as much of your earthly good as He pleases. Perhaps it would please Him that you should use the most of it for his service. But beware that you never again regard it as your own. No, nor your reputation either; nor your sensual pleasures of any sort. Give them all to Jesus, and cheerfully say—Savior, give me henceforth of all these things, little or much as thou pleasest; only give me the full and perpetual baptism of the Holy Spirit. So is “the Kingdom of Heaven like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls, who having found one of great price, went, and [actually] sold all that he had and bought it.” Reader, you will remark, that Christ avers the Kingdom of Heaven

to be like this transaction. Are you willing to seek its chief blessing in this very way? Then you may have it. Otherwise, not. Giving half will not avail.

Once more only. Feel assured that through the infinite goodness of God in Christ Jesus you may have this great blessing immediately, and keep it for ever. I beseech you to believe this, and believe it fully. Look with a humble and thankful spirit at the evidence on which this truth rests. Then *believe*. You cannot get it without believing. You must not think to get it while your very unbelief insults God, as you come before his throne to pray for it. He that doubteth is like a wave of the sea. "Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."

Reader, how will you justify the barrenness and spiritual apathy which may have reigned long in your soul? With a table thus loaded with blessings before

you, and such a Father standing by it, with his hands running over, why are you starving almost to death? Why are you a slave to any sin? Why is not your path brilliant with light—your heart glowing with love, and strong in faith—your lusts, and the world beneath your feet, and Jesus leading you on to higher knowledge and holier zeal, and to work like his in his service? The strength of the gospel is before you. Gird it on, and victory is yours.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

“He shall teach you all things.”—*John* 14: 26.

THIS is said of “the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost.” But is it really true in respect to *us*? Does not the promise in its ample meaning pertain to the primitive church only, and exclude us from the fullness of the blessings? In answer, I observe, that I hold it a safe rule by which to interpret the blessings of the gospel dispensation, that whenever we have deducted whatever is miraculous, the rest belongs to us and to the church in every age.

The miraculous department of these blessings belongs undoubtedly to the age of miracles. So it should. We do not want

it. But all the rest we do want. And God gives all the rest to us most freely. There is no monopoly of gospel blessings. It is no part of the divine policy to exhaust them upon one age of the church, and leave other ages unavoidably to famish in scantiness or starvation.

According to this view, the prophetic teachings of the Spirit are not now to be expected. God will not show us things to come. There is no need that He should. Nor will He enlarge the volume of revealed truth. We need not expect an appendix to that perfect book. God has no more to add.

Still it remains a glorious truth that the Spirit yet teaches, and in a most important sense teaches us "*all things*." It being the design of his work to convert and sanctify men, He teaches every thing that is requisite for these ends. Whatever we need to know for our comfort, quickening, usefulness, or sanctification, He is ready and able to teach us.

Again, it is plain that the Spirit now teaches at least as freely and as fully as Christ would if He were here with us in person. For Christ said, "it is expedient for you that I go away," so that the Comforter may come. Now if Christ were here with us, the chief benefit which we could derive from his presence would be in his instructions. These would be most precious. How we would gather round his feet and hang upon his lips; how we would bring up to Him all our questions, and all our difficulties, and learn of Him what to do, and how we may please and honor Him in all our ways. But the Spirit will teach us more and better than Christ could if He were again in person among his people. Himself being judge, it is well for us that He should go away, and the Spirit of truth come.

But on what subjects does the Spirit teach? And how does He teach? And how may his teachings be known? And how may we obtain them? To each of

these great questions, a brief answer will be attempted in this and subsequent chapters.

Of subjects taught by the Spirit I name,

1. *Prayer.* So Paul seems to assert. The "Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what to pray for as we ought." Rom. 8: 26. Hence the Spirit teaches us what we should pray for. He leads forth our minds to desire specific blessings. He knows most perfectly what we need, and therefore first prompts us to desire that thing, and then to pour forth our desires in prayer to God for it. Then, too, He helps our infirmities in manifold and precious ways. He suggests the promises on which our faith may take hold. He reveals God, an infinite Father—his throne all radiant with love and grace—and thus encourages us to come like needy children, and dare to trust, and dare to ask for heaven's bread of life. What Christian does not know that with

the Spirit's help, his heart flows forth in real, mighty prayer, grasps the very promise that applies, and finds it infinitely sweet to believe and trust—to ask and receive? Yes, every real Christian, taught of God, knows this.

2. *Truth.* The promised Comforter is “the Spirit of truth.” He teaches all truth. And here his peculiar province is to make us understand and fully appreciate what his written word contains. Happily for us, He knows the obstacles in our way and knows how to remove them. Our prejudice, our apathy, our selfishness, our bigotry, He can counteract, and can bring our minds into a meek, docile thirsting frame, in which divine truth is like milk to new-born babes. Then with what amazing ease and delight the mind learns of God and of his precious revealed truth. Besides this, it can not be doubted that the Being who gave us thinking minds, can lead forth these minds in search for truth, and guide our investiga-

tions with divine light to results which otherwise we should never attain.

3. *Duty.* When in the spirit of a willing child I go to my Father in heaven, and ask Him what He would have me do, or not do, I may expect his Spirit will teach me. This is what the Bible means by being "led by the Spirit." The wisdom of this world is commonly too wise to understand this, but all those know it who are taught of God. The monitions of the Spirit may come in most soft and gentle whispers, saying only, "this is the way" where my presence and love shall be with you—but those who have learned to commune with the Spirit, and to know his voice, shall be led in the right ways of the Lord.

4. *The Spirit teaches concerning Christ.* The Bible makes this point specific and emphatic. Said Christ, "He shall testify of me." He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." It seems therefore to be the

peculiar province, as it doubtless is the delight of the Spirit, to show us Christ. Think how the Spirit loves the Son. Then conceive with what pleasure He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. How He unfolds the meekness, the sweetness, the loveliness, and the glory of Christ's character, bringing every point before our minds in all that mild radiance which belongs peculiarly to his own manifestations; and making our minds see Christ, and our hearts feel the power of his apprehended character, as if we had never known Him before. No wonder that under these views of the glory of the Lord, "we are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord."

5. The Spirit teaches especially the *gospel*. The plan of salvation through Christ, all its fullness, adaptation, power, every thing about it that we need to know in order to experience its full blessings, the Spirit came to teach. So said

Paul, "We have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God." (1 Cor. 2: 12.) Now the things that are freely, that is, graciously given us of God, what are they but those free gifts of his Son and his Spirit whereby we find free redemption from sin and deliverance from its power, and are brought back to be God's real children? These things, then, the Spirit is given to make us know. How rich the blessing! How competent the teacher! How fraught with life, and peace, and purity, are his precious teachings! That same gospel, which is as barren as the wastes of death to many, becomes, under the Spirit's teachings, all verdant with beauty, and fresh with life and glory. It is to the soul as if it were a new revelation.

Christian reader, has the gospel in your eyes aught of beauty or glory? Does it ravish your soul with its charms? It

does, I know, if you are taught it by the Spirit of God. But if the gospel to you is dull or powerless, you may know that your great Teacher is gone.

CHAPTER XXIX.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

“He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have taught you.”—*John 14 : 26.*

THE question, *How* does the Spirit teach? is one of some practical use. Whatever we can really *know* about it is useful: all speculations on points beyond our knowledge, may be wisely and well omitted. On this principle I shall forbear to inquire after the specific mode in which the Infinite Spirit reaches and affects our minds. I am content to leave that unknown until we can better understand how mind can ever act directly on mind, without the intervention of physical organs. Yet our ignorance on such points need create no difficulty. For

who can believe that the Infinite Author of our minds has constructed them so that they are necessarily excluded from his own immediate and direct agency?

There are some points of accessible knowledge upon the general question, How does the Divine Spirit teach our minds? I therefore answer negatively,

1. Not now as of old by voices or visions. This mode belonged to the primitive dispensation, and to the infant state of the human mind and of the church. It was wise when men needed revelations of new truth. For this end it is no longer needed, and the evidence of facts seems to prove that it is laid aside.

2. The Spirit teaches not now by mere *impulses*. For impulses are not *teaching*. They neither suggest, nor illustrate, nor impress any truth.

But following the light of the Bible, and of facts, we are probably safe in saying, positively, that the Spirit teaches,

1. *By prompting and holding the attention of the mind.* So "the Lord opened the heart of Lydia that she attended to the things spoken by Paul." And so in many ways the Spirit arrests and fixes the attention, and thus gets truth distinctly before the mind. Then also the Spirit can quicken the mental powers, and awaken an interest in knowing the truth.

2. *By employing the laws of mental association, or suggestion.* So much Christ teaches us. "He shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." So also the experience of Christians testifies. They know that the Spirit suggests to their minds the promises or the precepts, and that too just when they need them. It is most interesting to observe that the Spirit does this in a most impressive and effective way. Just the right promise is always given. The truth suggested most perfectly fits our condition and our

wants. He who suggests it knows not merely our temptations, but our attitude of mind, and capacity to be affected by any given truth or promise. Hence the perfect adaptation, and hence it so often seems as if the truth suggested by the Spirit were a new truth, never seen before, so new are its relations, and so perfectly and strikingly does it fit our case. I recently knew an individual fiercely assaulted with temptation. Ere long the passage, "kept by the power of God through faith" came to the mind of that individual, and it was like the very arm of Jesus Himself. It brought salvation. It filled the soul with sweet confidence in Christ. It was the very thing, and the Spirit of God not only brought it before the mind, but made its precious truth all bright and cheering as sunbeams, breaking suddenly from the darkest night and the fiercest storm. And it seemed indeed as if that passage were a new page of the Bible.

So thousands of God's people can testify. They know that truth sometimes comes before their minds in new aspects, so touching, melting, transforming, quickening, that they are compelled to say—the power that has wrought this is more than human. They may see in this the inward workings of Him “who shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance.” Eminently is this the case when the Spirit fulfills that promise of Christ, “He shall testify of me.” Christian reader, have you not known a man in Christ, in the course of your history, who seemed in his views of Christ to be “caught up”—at least who had such views of the glory of Jesus, as no tongue can utter; who saw such excellence and loveliness in Christ, that He sank down at those blessed feet, almost overwhelmed with irrepressible swellings of emotion, bathed in tears of mingling penitence and gratitude; admiring, adoring, praising; and yet all the time feeling that a

thousand hearts and a thousand tongues would be utterly inadequate to feel or tell his manifest glories?

There are those who have testimony to bear on this point, not very unlike that of St. Paul; and they can ascribe it intelligently to no other chief cause except the agency of that Spirit of whom Christ said, "He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." After such experience, they can understand this language, for Christ is in their eyes *glorified* indeed. They see glories ineffable, beaming in his countenance. That face wears an aspect combining such sweetness, meekness, gentleness, condescension, and yet so unutterably pure and holy, so blessed, that mortal language would fail in any attempt to describe it. It is somewhat as if the radiance of the noon-day sun were transformed into the radiance of love, and the intensity of a thousand such suns were condensed into one—and that, the

face of the Lamb. And yet these glories have such a heavenly mildness, that you seem allured to gaze on them forever.

3. The Spirit often employs external providences in aid of his work.

When the Christian's heart is borne down by affliction, smarting under the rod, He administers the balm of consolation. He avails Himself of the impression already made by the chastening hand, and comes in to soften, to purify, as the case may be, to accomplish the very end which He deems requisite for that Christian's sanctification. And no doubt the chastisement is often sent as a preparation for the Spirit's work. The clay is made soft for his plastic hand. Or in another figure, the iron of man's heart, comes out from the furnace of affliction, to be molded by the Spirit into new forms of moral beauty and use in the Master's service. The Spirit of God can then effect the change.

And, Christian brother, is it not wise and safe for us to trust the teachings of the Spirit? Is it not a matter of most devout and everlasting gratitude that Jesus has sent us such a Teacher? Will you not put away sin, and put on the docile spirit of a little child, and hasten to his feet and open your heart to his teachings? The treasures of gospel knowledge and the glories of gospel grace are in his gift, and no fountain of living waters ever gave forth its streams more freely.

CHAPTER XXX.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

“Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”—2 *Cor.* 11: 14.

IF so, then his influences may resemble those of the Holy Spirit of light, and how can we distinguish the one from the other? Every Christian reader will see that it must be to himself of infinite moment, that he should be able to make this distinction, that he should know the work of the Holy Spirit of God by its appropriate tests, or marks, so as never to be misled by Satan. For, be it never forgotten, this is a world of temptation, and influences to evil are abroad all over it, and of every sort. Enough there are within us, and enough without us; some

from the external world, and some of a spiritual kind from the devil and his angels. So under both the Old and New Testament dispensations there were false prophets who taught false doctrines, and who seem to have been led by the great deceiver. But God then took special pains to hold up this fact in solemn warning, and reveal the tests by which the spirit of darkness might be known. So now the Spirit of truth leaves not Himself without witness. Tests there are by which his genuine influences may be ascertained. *And what are they?*

I answer, not *instinct*. This may be a safe law for the lower animals, but God never made it any law at all for things or beings of a moral character. Again, not *impressions*. The bare impression on any mind that this comes from the Spirit of God does not prove that it does. Satan may have told me that very thing. He is a liar of old. Nor, again, is the pleasurable emotion produced on my mind, of

course proof that the influence which caused it is from God. When Satan becomes an angel of light, and touches some of the more refined springs of selfish joy, there may be a gushing flood of pleasant emotion. That soul might sing itself away—to perdition.

But there are substantial tests by which the Spirit's teachings may be known. I believe them to be mainly included under the following heads:

1. *The Spirit's teachings harmonize with God's word.* For both have the same Author. Both have the same object. The divine Spirit now comes to make more clear and effective on our minds the very truth already revealed in the Bible. This first great principle ought to be thoroughly understood by every Christian. Then we shall see that the Bible is not only a book of instruction, but THE great book, comprising all divine revelation—the sum total of all divine truth that we are to know of God on

this side Heaven. And in this view of the case, we have a great standard by which to try all spiritual influences of every sort. One question only is to be asked. *Do they correspond with the book which we have from God?* God's Spirit never teaches any thing in opposition to the revealed truth of the Bible. Satan does. Here is always a broad, an immensely wide difference. And, Christian reader, if you will search the Bible constantly with great diligence, and much prayer for the Spirit's aid, so that your very soul shall drink in its real sentiments, and apprehend its genuine meaning, you need not be deceived by the father of lies.

This test admits of being universally and easily applied. Suppose that in extreme trial you are perplexed, disappointed, injured by bad men or good men, and some impulse within you says, "You do well to be angry; now fret, rebel, cut your enemy and make Him smart for it.

The cause of truth and justice demands it." But who is this prompter? Is he from above or from beneath? I answer, by his fruits you may know him. Compare his doctrines with the Bible. When the Spirit of God recalls the right truth to your remembrance, does it say fret, rebel, retaliate, make your enemy pay dearly for the sin of having troubled you? Are these precepts extracted from the sacred pages? Are they found there along side of the doctrine, "Love your enemies"—"Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil"—"forbearing and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ did, so do ye?"

It is easy to see that this principle applies in the same manner to the Spirit's teaching in regard to *doctrinal truth*. Here, too, the Bible is the text. New pretended revelations which depart from the Bible, are vain as the wind. If the reader will examine Deut. 13: 1—5, and 1 John 4: 1—3, he will see this principle

developed in both the Old and the New Testament dispensations. If a man taught idolatry in Israel, no matter how many miracles he wrought, and how much inspiration he claimed or seemed to have, the people must kill him without mercy, and hearken not to his lies. The discrepancy of his doctrine with God's known revealed truth, was enough to seal his doom against all possible testimony in his favor. So the apostle John taught the church not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits whether they were of God, and gave this one great test,—Do they confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh? This cardinal doctrine of the primitive church was the great touchstone. Let a man claim ever so much inspiration and prove it ever so plausibly, if his doctrine is not the Bible, his spirit is anti-Christ.

2. *The effects of the Spirit's teaching correspond with the fruits of the Spirit as revealed in the Bible.* Most fortu-

nately the Bible has told us plainly what the fruits of the Spirit's work in the soul will always be. They are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."—Gal. 5: 22. Hence all spiritual influences may be known by their fruits. What sort of an effect do they have on the mind? Do they breathe over it the soft gales of heaven? Do they wake up the glowings of universal love—love even to my enemy? Do they melt my spirit into sweet sympathy with the blest spirit of Jesus? Then I have nothing to fear. I know that this is from the Spirit of God. The devil never made any man love his enemy. The devil never set himself to increase the amount of disinterested good-will among mankind. He never made war against the selfishness of man's heart. Of course the devil's imitations of the Spirit may always be detected by their fruits. Do they cherish ill-will to man, or pride?

Do they particularly gratify *myself*, by subserving my own selfish ends? Do they chime in with the demands of of my lusts, and by much sophistry, and much distortion of the Bible, seem to prove from Holy Writ that I may rightly make a god of my belly, or an idol of my reputation? Ah, such teachings bear the mark of their subtle, hellish authorship. He knows his strong hold. And you, Christian, ought not to be ignorant of his devices.

3. *The previous state of our own minds* may rightly aid us in distinguishing the works of the Spirit from all counterfeits. The principle on which this sentiment rests is no other than this. "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?" "How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Now if I have been waiting humbly on God, hun-

gering for the Spirit, coming like a child and trusting in my Father for it, need I fear that He will send me a delusion or suffer the devil to ensnare me? Will He give me a serpent? I trow not.

But if I have been in a selfish state of mind ; cherishing a proud complacency in my own knowledge of religion, or in my talents ; or if I have been listening to the demands of my sensual being ; and am rather inviting some influence to defend me in their indulgence, then I may expect, not the Spirit of God, but the spirit of delusion. I am all naked to the shafts of the devil. I have opened the door and thrown away my armor, and the traitor within bids the foul spirit come on. No wonder now if he comes.

CHAPTER XXXI.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”—2 Cor. 6: 16, 17.

OF all possible inquiries respecting the Holy Spirit's agency, by far the most important to us is this; *How can we obtain it to enlighten and renew our own souls?* Other inquiries may be pertinent and wise—this is indispensable. Knowledge on other points is valuable—knowledge on this is particu-

ticularly, pre-eminently, supremely so. Reader, dost thou love holiness? Does thy soul pant for the image of God, and long inexpressibly for victory over sin? Wouldest thou be taught of God?" Then,

1. *Have no fellowship with sin.* Follow the direction of our text, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." It matters little what this unclean thing, in your case, may be. Whether it be a molten or a graven image—whether it be lust, or pride, or honor, or wealth—the assent of your mind to it is enough to repel the Holy Spirit. As certainly as the Spirit is pure, so certainly will cherished sin in your heart forbid his indwelling presence and his gracious teaching. This is beyond all question the doctrine of our text and the doctrine of sound sense on this subject. You will observe that the doctrine does not maintain that the Spirit can not dwell with a soul still imperfect. It does not involve

the absurdity that our hearts must be perfectly pure before the Spirit can dwell in them to make them pure. No. But it does maintain that the soul must voluntarily renounce its sins, and *all* its sins, and by no means hope for concord in the same heart between Christ and Belial, or seek communion of light with darkness. God will not be the patron of sin.

2. *Keep a tender conscience.* It was infinitely kind in God to give us a moral sense, which might keenly and quickly admonish us of moral danger. In general we may regard its sudden responses as the oracle of God to the soul. Now you *can* drown this voice divine. You can hush its whispers. You can so resist its admonitions that it shall retire into some deep recess in your soul and lie hidden till another day shall wake up its restored and deathless energies. Any degree of abuse will vitiate the keenness and justness of its admonitions, and its gentle whispers are indignantly suppressed.

Now be it never forgotten, this is your best friend. Therefore cherish his friendship; walk softly; consult your conscience. An approving conscience and the Spirit of God dwell peaceably together.

3. Have a deep sense of your own ignorance, and of your extreme need of the Spirit's teaching. Assuredly, if you trust to your own understanding, God will leave you to find out that you are a fool. If you know enough already, or if you have any other sources of knowledge, whether in your education, or your talents, or in human teachers, and these take the place of the Spirit of God, you need not expect his teachings. Ah, how few of the learned and the wise are really taught of God! Much more often does God ordain praise from the mouths of babes and sucklings, for the simple reason that they are not too proud and self-conceited to be taught from above. Yet how infinitely wise and sweet for the learned to feel that they know nothing

yet as they would know it, and that they may come to the infinite fountain of wisdom in the spirit of a little child. To this very point may be applied that grand condition announced by our Lord—"Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." At the feet of our heavenly Teacher—as it is the only suitable, so it is the only *possible* place for us to receive his precious teachings.

4. *Esteem his teachings above all price.* You can not prize them too highly. What can be more precious than to be *taught of God*? Need I ask you to estimate its worth by first conceiving of the value of the wisest of all human teachers, then of Gabriel, and so in the ascending scale till you approximate, or rather *seem* to approximate towards the wisdom of the Infinite? Such a mode may aid an infant's comprehension, but it does little indeed towards giving us a just conception of the ineffable worth of the

Spirit's teaching. Ah, one's mind seems forced back upon itself under the view of goodness infinite and overpowering! How ungrateful then not to prize the blessing infinitely above all other sources of wisdom and knowledge.

5. *Study the Bible.* This may be called the text-book of the Spirit. This is the basis of his teaching. This is the *lesson* which he gives you to study, and comes Himself to explain. Then study it much, deeply, practically—I mean for practical purposes, and in search of practical truth; and above all, study it in conscious and deep dependence upon the Spirit's teaching.

6. Keep your mind from being dissipated and polluted with reading or thoughts not religious. All such things as will not aid you in duty towards God or man—why should you have aught to do with them at all? You can not intermeddle with such things either by reading or conversation, without peril to your soul.

They will make their foul impress. They will leave their indelible stain. They will grieve and repel the Spirit of God. Shall the same mind be the joint dwelling place of purity and impurity, of wisdom and of folly? Will the Spirit teach you while you also take lessons at the feet of pollution? Away then with all that class of writing and of conversation that is steeped with the Spirit of the world. Its temper is selfish, ambitious, proud, sensual, earthly minded, and what has a child of God to do with such things? Most if not all novels and romances belong in this class, and an immense amount of the idle conversation that fills up society. You can have your choice between these things and the Spirit of God; both you can not have and need not foolishly expect.

7. Believe that the Spirit is both able and willing to teach you.

How shall I give emphasis enough to this point? Probably most sincere Chris-

tians fail here perhaps more than any where else. Ah, how little they appreciate the infinite love of the Spirit, prompting intense desires to teach them all things, and accomplish all his blessed work in their souls. Hence their feeling is—"O that we might even with our utmost labor, and by some fortunate turn of things, obtain a morsel, a very crumb of those great blessings!" Dear child, you did not know that in your Father's house "there is bread enough and to spare," saved on purpose for you, given as freely as ever father gave bread to his child. And will you not know this and believe it? It is as true as that God is love—as true as that Christ has died—as true as that the Spirit has come into the world to teach and sanctify your soul.

8. Hence, finally, *pray for the Spirit*. and ask in faith nothing doubting. Know assuredly that if you will do what the nature of the case requires of you—put away your sins and consent to be taught

of God and led by his Spirit, the blessing is sure and abundant. Why then ask in wavering? Why not honor God by your confidence in his love and in his promises? Why not open your mouth wide that God may fill it with his spiritual blessings as he has said?

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CHURCH PAST AND FUTURE.

“For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.—*Isa.* 62: 1—3.

WE shall do no violence to the meaning of this passage, if we understand it of Spiritual Zion—the real church of God. Viewed in this light it presents three points of great interest.

1. *A certain state described which the prophet desires and indeed predicts.*

2. *The fact that the Church in this state greatly honors her God.*

3. *The prophet's hope and prayer in regard to the anticipated blessing.*

1. The state described is one in which the "righteousness of the Church shall go forth as brightness, and its salvation as a lamp that burneth," when the Gentiles shall see her righteousness and all kings her glory;" her old name shall no longer fit her, but she shall be called by a new name, which God Himself shall give her. A state like this is seen vividly by means of contrast. Who has not seen the contrast of it, and wept over it with bitter weeping? Ah, who has not seen the Church when her righteousness had lost its brightness, when the lustre of her purity shone dimly, almost as if it were no lustre; and her salvation from her sins did not seem glorious like a burning lamp, but fading as if it would even go out in

utter darkness? Her flame was flickering and fitful, often a smoke in the nose and not a serene and lovely light; the ungodly saw, not her righteousness and glory, but her nakedness and shame, and they looked upon her with scornful air and said, "Let her light rebuke us no more—let her sun go down in darkness, and no more expose our doings." There was sadness then on the face of those that loved Zion, and with sighs, deep from the heart, they cried, O Lord our God, how long!

Our Father on high has never said to the seed of Jacob, "seek ye me in vain." Their deep sighings over Zion meet with sympathy in his heart. Ah, He too loves Zion, and is not heedless of her desolation, nor silent to her uplifted cries for help. Therefore has He said that her righteousness shall one day go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth; that so the Gentiles shall see her righteousness and all kings her

glory, and from his own lips she shall have a new name, descriptive of her new character.

2. *In this state the church shall honor her Lord.* In her state of darkness she has not done this. She did profess to represent Christ among men—she bore his name and had in possession his gospel, and she said she would follow his example, and the world might look on and see a reflected image of Jesus; but they looked and alas! it was the image of the world. There were selfishness and lust. There were greediness for gain, and thirsting for honor. Tauntingly they cried; “This, then, is the religion of your Master, and such the life you would recommend to us, and such as this, the Savior of whom you make your boast.”

These things have not been hidden from his eye who walks among the golden candlesticks. For this is the Church whom He has espoused as his bride. With what feelings then does He look

on her pollution—on her self-sought dishonor? Jesus had left her in charge with his name, and bade her proclaim it with her voice and life—but see what abuse of trust! what a rejection of high privilege! what ingratitude for so rich mercies! He would have worn her as his crown of glory, and his royal diadem—but she was a deep disgrace to his name!

A page of prophecy is unrolled, luminous with glory—and the scene changes. The Church stands forth redeemed, regenerated, washed, and made white and lovely. I know not how this truth could be taught more strikingly, or with more thrilling associations, than in our text. “Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” Then Jesus shall bear her as his crown. She shall adorn his person, and cause his glory to be known. So would we have it. So it should be. It carries a thrill of joy to our bosom to know that Jesus shall one

day be honored by a pure and lovely church. For then He will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. The blood and the agonies are not in vain.

3. The prophet's prayers and vows—who will not make them most spontaneously and most ardently? Who will not respond “amen; For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until” this day of Zion's purity shall come. Reader, pause here, and study this sacred vow. Catch the sympathy of this strong, heaven-born emotion. Can you not see most clearly **WHY** you should pour your soul out before God like water, for the coming of such a day? Can you think of Christ and his church, and see how He has loved it and died to redeem it unto Himself a pure church and spotless; and also take into view, a world in ruins, yet redeemed by Jesus' blood, and to be saved through the Church, and still find it hard to pray for Zion's transformation?

Mark the strength of faith developed here. It seems to say, "I *know* the day is coming. I will not hold my peace, therefore, nor take my rest till it comes. God has said, and He will do it." O ! when will the Spirit from on high inspire such faith in the hearts of all the sons and daughters of Zion ! And when shall God for this "be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them?"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

GOD'S LOVE FOR ZION.

“The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.”—*Ps.* 87: 2.

YES, the Lord loves the gates of Zion, even of his spiritual Zion. Most abundantly has He declared this, and with most rich and cheering similitudes has He represented it. “For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name: and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall He be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—*Isa.* 54: 5—8. O, what love! what kindness! what promises! How precious and touching is the antithesis of future good over against past affliction. A small moment of forsaking, and everlasting kindness of the ingathering; a *little* wrath in the hiding of his face, but *great* mercies and everlasting favor in the final shining forth of that face on Zion, like the sun in his strength and glory.

Verily, the Lord loves Zion. How amply has He proved this by his ceaseless care of her interests! Often, indeed, both in ancient days, and in all days, has Zion passed through the fires of tribulation, and the deep waters of adversity; but when has God utterly forsaken her? If ever, it was as Himself says, for a small moment only. Zion has never lacked foes. Oft times they have been many and

strong, and sure of victory. They have thought to crush the infant in the cradle, but God took care. They have thought to root out the Church, name and memorial, from under heaven—but God has made her live. They have tried upon her, shame and fire and faggot; but all in vain. God has been with her in the fiery furnace. The history of God's care of Zion, and of her victories in the strength of her God, is wonderful. It shows that of a truth God has loved the gates of Zion more than all else that is fair and lovely on this footstool of his throne.

Then God does love his Zion. Let the thought dwell in my soul as a living reality and a precious consolation. Men may revile and hate her. They may cast out her name as evil, and mock at her hopes, and laugh to scorn her doctrines, her labors, her character, and even her Lord: but what have I to fear, or what cause have I for shame? Let it ever be

enough for me that Zion has one Friend on high.

The Lord loves Zion. Would that all her professed children loved her too. But alas ! here are some of her heaviest trials. When I see how many love the world so much that the love of Christ cannot be in them, and how cold is the love for Zion in many others : when I mark how little, almost to nothing, they say or do for Zion's Lord, I am deeply grieved and discouraged. With heavy sighs, I ask, Will Zion ever arise and shine ? Can her God ever have mercy on her, and appear in his glory to build up her broken walls and crumbling palaces ? I have one hope. I know the Lord loves Zion.

Yes, and let it animate my faith in prayer ; for I know that I have no need to move the sympathy of God as if He felt not for his suffering cause on earth, and for his crucified Son. He does feel for these interests incomparably more than I

do or ever can. Alas for Zion! if there were not One on high who loves her with more constancy and ardor and strength than her sons and daughters on earth do.

It is a precious truth that God loves Zion, and well may it strengthen my hands to labor for her glorious enlargement. For labor done for Zion shall not be in vain. Human enterprises may come to nought, and disappointment crush the fondest hopes of mortals. But the great enterprise of redeeming a world from sin and of bringing it to the feet of Jesus shall not fail. How can it, if the Lord loves Zion, and has given her his promise that with everlasting kindness He will gather her, and to his Son "will give the heathen for his inheritance?"

Yet again, let me remember that the Lord loves Zion, and let the recollection be my solace as I sympathize with all her sorrows and despondings. For she has other friends who sympathize in all she

suffers. Yes, she has noble friends, and strong deliverers.

And amid a world whose scorn is sometimes poured on Zion's people, it may well be their consolation and more than consolation that in all their love for Zion, they feel with God and Christ and all the holy. They hold communion in this sympathy with the infinite God. His heart feels like theirs for Zion's interests, and Zion's children. And who would not be happy in sympathy with God, though the universe besides were against him? Who would not deem it his highest glory, and a privilege well-bought with a martyr's stake, to have the sweet consciousness of feeling as God feels in the love He bears to Zion?—Reader, this privilege and glory *may* become yours—but *is it now?*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”—*Acts 20: 26, 27.*

PAUL here distinctly recognizes the doctrine of mutual responsibility. He tacitly admits that if he had not done certain things, he would stand in some sense guilty of the blood of men. And such is the fact. Traveling as we are in close companionship through life to the judgment, daily throwing forth influences which affect for good or ill the characters of all around us, we must be responsible for the good or ill we do—for the life or death of souls. In the hand of

every one God has lodged varied powers of doing good, or at least, the capacity for calling into being, and cultivating such powers; and now he justly holds us responsible for their use.

Dear reader, have you ever solemnly weighed this great, perhaps to you, appalling truth? Have you really contemplated, in all its bearings upon yourself, this doctrine that you are personally responsible for the spiritual good, yea, the salvation of all within the range of and to the extent of your possible influence? I beseech you to pause and do it. Do it with the judgment-bar before you—do it with distinct and glowing apprehensions of that farther state which the deeds of earth shall stamp with joy or woe unmingled and eternal.

Paul discharged these responsibilities, and acquitted himself of the blood of all men. And how? Hear his own answer. "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

There were things in God's plan of salvation which were unwelcome enough to the Ephesians. Paul did not for that reason shun to declare them. It was at the peril of riot and of life that Paul resisted there the demons of darkness, and the spirit of selfishness; but without fear or favor, *he did it*.

Thus he washed himself from their blood. Whatever truth they needed, he "shunned not to declare." He "kept back nothing that was profitable." He bent the mighty energies of his mind and heart to the salvation of their souls. Thus he discharged his responsibilities there. If the guilty Ephesians now reject salvation, they do it at their peril, and they alone must bear it. If the Church lose their first love, the guilty deed is their own. They fall back in the face of the oft reiterated warnings of this servant of Christ, and they must bear the rebuke of his Master alone

But who stands with Paul in this thing, "free from the blood of all men?" Reader, do you?

You are a parent-perhaps, and your children have gathered round your fire-side and your table these years, and in all your going out and coming in they have been with you, molded by your hand and your heart,—but *how*? for heaven, or for hell? under the sweet influence of a heavenly spirit, of clear instruction, holy consecration, struggling prayer, and faith in God's precious covenant; or under the deadening influence of a spirit that loves earthly good most, that is "careful and troubled about many things," and which seeks first the honor that comes from men? How is this? Be assured that if the latter has been your spirit and influence, the blood of souls must be required at your hand; the souls of those whom you should most long to save, and most dread to meet unpardoned before the great white throne.

Or among the multiplied relations of life, you may be a brother, a sister, a husband, a wife, or merely a friend or a companion. Be your condition what it may, you have immense responsibilities. Study them. Say not in your heart that they pertain to none but the authorized preachers of the gospel. They pertain *to you*. *And you must meet them*, and in them find your account of good or evil deeds in the great reckoning day.

Will these lines meet the eye of one who ministers at the altar, bearing his commission from God to preach the oft unwelcome messages of the divine counsel? Christian brother, have you done as Paul did? Can you take to record all who know you, that you are pure from their blood, and that too on the substantial ground that you "have not shunned to declare to them all the counsel of God?" Have you truly declared *it all*, clearly, earnestly, sincerely, with much prayer, and a holy life? Can you follow Paul in

saying to your flock; "Remember that by the space of the years I have been with you I have ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears?" O! have you labored and wept *thus*?

The answer takes hold of consequences infinite. It may seal your doom—a "faithful servant, entering the joy of your Lord;" or "an unprofitable servant, cast out among hypocrites and unbelievers, where are weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

CHAPTER XXXV.

WISE IN WINNING SOULS.

“He that winneth souls is wise.”—*Prov.* 11 : 30.

THERE are a few among the multitude of professing Christians who are *really* engaged in winning souls to Christ. Would that their number were increased a thousand fold ! As a general fact, those who are engaged thus with all their hearts, are eminently successful. The text seems to assert that the successful laborers in this work are really wise. I believe this to be true. Whether they have the philosophy of science, or only the philosophy of common sense, they surely have great practical wisdom. This must be quite apparent to any one who duly estimates the difficulties they sur-

mount. What can be a more difficult, delicate thing to manage than the sinner's heart? Think of the clustering prejudices, the confirmed sinful habits, the giant powers of temptation, the proud commitment in evil-doing, and the subtle perversions of truth, which all combine to crowd sinners straight onward in the broad road to death. Ah, how few of the far-gone are ever reclaimed!

Then, conceive of the immense interest at stake. He who can manage the destinies of kingdoms successfully is a wise man. How much more is he who can rightly move the main-spring of a self-moving, deathless spirit—who can skillfully touch the key-notes which are to respond forever with the music of heaven, or with the wailings of the lost!

Reader, will you be one out of the many readers of these lines who will really try to save souls? And do you ask anxiously, *How can it be done?* Then I answer,

1. *Sympathize, yourself, with God and with Christ.* By this I mean that you should enter into their feelings ; exercise and cherish the benevolence which they feel towards the sinner. Let your own bosom glow with that love for human well-being with which "God so loved the world as to give up his Son," and Jesus so loved the lost as to come to seek and save them, even through the shame and agony of the cross. Moreover, you must take God's part against the sinner, and defend the interests of justice. This you must do ; for your business is to convict the sinner of his wrong against God, and persuade him to turn back, confess and forsake his guilty rebellion.

2. *You must also sympathize with the sinner.* Not with his sins however, nor exactly with him *as a sinner* ; but with him as a fellow-being, destined to bliss or woe immense and eternal, and now deluded and on the brink of ruin. Viewed in this relation, you may sympathize with

him most intensely. Perhaps he is your brother, your husband, or your child. Oh, how you may and ought to love his well-being ! How intensely should you seek to save his soul from the grasp of sin, from the doom of the damned !

3. *Study that sinner's character and precise moral condition.* Find out where he stands, what his views are, what are his chief temptations, what kind of bonds Satan has thrown round him, and under what refuges of lies he is hidden. You need to know the points of access. You want to get off his triple coat of mail, and aim God's sharpened arrows at his heart. Perhaps you may reach him in the line of his social sympathies. The honest tear may melt where the thunder of rebuke is powerless. You need to know what manner of spirit that is with which you have to do.

4. *Study your own heart and your own past history.* That sinner's heart is much like what your own once was. What

took hold of your mind may take hold of his. What always repelled you will probably repel him. Much, very much you may learn in this line of inquiry. The lesson is simple and near at hand, but rich with instruction. It is a page of wisdom. Clogged with imperfections and infirmities as you may be, you have at least this one great facility—you have the experience of one human heart to guide you—your own. Besides this, you have some precious ties of sympathy, friendship, or relationship, by which, if wise, you may draw sinners to Christ. In this view we may see one of the reasons why God employs converted sinners and not angels in the work of winning souls.

5. *Work with God.* Yes, for you can hope to do nothing effectually unless both your hand and your heart are with God. Your heart must be in most close and constant communion with Him, so that you shall be led by his Spirit. If you set about winning souls to emblazon your

own name, or to build up a party church, or for any, even the most refined selfish objects, how can you hope for success? Will God smile on your hypocrisy and bless your selfishness? Or can you convert souls without God's blessing?

6. You will not forget to *pray for God's Spirit, and rely upon it for the real energy which gives success.* You may plant and water, but God gives the increase. And "God will yet for this be inquired of," as He has said. If you would labor with might for God, be mighty in prayer.

7. I am pressed to make one more suggestion. If you would win souls, **TRY.** Be not too prudent, or too timid to attempt it. Be not afraid to *begin.* Leave not the work to others. And do not wait even for your minister. Let him do what he can, but if he is a man of God, he wants you also to do all you can. And if he does little or nothing, how much

greater is the need that you should take hold mightily and spare not. Probation is wasting; every heart is growing harder; your day of effort is passing, and souls are dying; and who now will *try* to win souls to salvation?

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE STONE ROLLED AWAY.

“Who shall roll away for us the stone from the door of the sepulcher?”—*Mark*, 16: 3.

THE hour of bitterest pangs had come to earth's great Sufferer, and all his disciples had forsaken Him save the 'beloved' one. Should we say, all the rest? Nay, there was another little band whose sympathizing hearts precluded fear of peril, whose love for Jesus drew them close to the scene of his last agony. How could they leave Him now?

Christian reader, have you not often thought—O, that I had been there; what a luxury it had been to face death from a Roman guard, or from infuriated scribes

and priests, if I might only have stood by the dying Jesus to shed my tears around his cross, and throw my look of sympathy upon his forsaken, anguished bosom; if I might have soothed one pain, or made Him feel that He had yet one friend. Add this—If I might also have had grace in that hour to slay all fear of death, and quicken into flame my love for the Man of Calvary. For it would have been sad indeed, to have denied the sinner's Friend in such an hour!

It is an honor to the race that "certain women" had courage and love enough to stand by and weep around the Crucified in his last hours. It is an honor to piety and to triumphant grace. They saw Him die. Affection stayed not there; it followed the sleeping dead; watched every movement of those who took the body, and "saw where He was laid." Anon they hastened and made their spices ready, with many tears, no doubt, and agitations of soul unutterable;

for they thought the "hope of Israel" was gone.

A Sabbath intervened. O what a Sabbath was that! Think of those weeping "daughters of Jerusalem," gathered in some upper chamber, keeping Sabbath—the scenes of Calvary all fresh in recollection, and the morning visit to the tomb to anoint the body in anticipation. What are they doing? Are they in prayer, or in anxious musings, wondering what shall be the end of these things? Has their hope fled utterly? or does some angel from heaven whisper to their bosoms that all shall yet be well? We do not know. But it must have been a trying, solemn day. Night came. They woke early, if indeed they slept at all. They are hastening towards the sepulcher. At this moment they remember the great stone which they saw rolled against the door. How shall this difficulty, staring them in the face, be surmounted? "Who," said they, "will roll us away

the stone from the door of the sepulcher?"

Their business required that they should enter. They could not be denied the privilege of going in and applying their ointment and sweet spices to the cold remains of Him they loved. What shall they do? It was an emergency—such as often occurs in the Christian's life—a mountain-barrier, straight across their path—a lion in the way; what can be done? They looked up, and lo, it was gone! The Lord had sent his angel, and the stone was no more there; it was very great, but was rolled away.

So it commonly happens when God's people go forward in their work of love, daring to face their difficulties, and venture to *look up*.

Let not this lesson, my brother and sister, be forgotten. When God says, go forward, be not dismayed. Fear not the great stone upon the door. The Lord has angels enough to roll that stone

away. He would sooner send twelve legions of them, than have his work in your hands fail, if true love to Jesus is leading you on, as it did those devoted sisters, to pour your tears upon his cold body, and bestow your costly spices and ointments to honor his sacred memory. If love to Jesus thus leads you through peril, cost and toil, to honor your Lord, you need not fear the great stone upon the door. God will send some messenger of his to roll it seasonably away.

Even feeble woman need not fear. The soldier may be there with spear and battle-axe and visage stern and terrific; but God's angels are there too. Or like the Marys, you may find the soldiers gone away before you reach the place. Ah, more, you may find the Lord Himself there; and the first hint of his being risen, may come in that well-known, heaven-toned voice, *Mary, Mary*. It would be thrice blessed to

meet Jesus so—to meet Him while on such an errand to his grave—to meet Him while seeking to pay the last honors to his mangled, buried, guarded body.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ISRAEL—A PRINCE WITH GOD.

“I will not let thee go except thou bless me.”—
Gen. 32 : 26.

JACOB was returning from the country of Laban to the land of his father's sepulchers. An absence of twenty years had greatly changed his circumstances. He went forth a young man, alone, with no patrimony but a father's blessing and a mother's tears and prayers—save also that covenant promise of the Lord who met him on the first evening of his pilgrimage. But now he returns with a family of eleven children, two wives, and an immense property in flocks and herds. All this most striking change in his condition, he recognizes as

the result of Jehovah's covenant mercy. His language is pertinent and beautiful; "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."

His route of return leads him near Esau's residence. Well does Jacob remember his brother's ancient grudge, and threats to take his life. But he hopes the lapse of time has softened his brother's keen resentment, so that a conciliating message will reach his heart. His messengers return with heavy tidings. "We came to thy brother Esau"—"he is coming to meet thee with an army of four hundred men."

Now let us fix our eye on Jacob. It is one of the trying hours of his life. He saw at a glance that Esau's wrath was kindled. He knew that himself had no

physical force to resist a troop of four hundred armed men. "I fear him, said he, lest he will come and smite the mother with the children."

What can he do in this emergency?

The utmost that human skill can do he promptly does to appease his brother; or, if this effort shall fail, to favor the escape of a part of his precious train. He sends forward a valuable present—he places himself next, hoping to appeal by kindness to his brother's heart. Then he divides his family and cattle into two bands so that if Esau should smite one of them, the other might escape by flight. So much for the external arrangements.

All this, however, is but the outside of the matter;—the heart of Jacob is chiefly occupied on other points incomparably more engrossing. His burdened soul turns toward his father's God. It fastens on the covenant made first with Abraham, renewed with Isaac, entailed upon himself by the birthright, and moreover

renewed to him most solemnly at Bethel. There, in that "house of God," the Lord had said to him—"Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, *and will bring thee again into this land* ; (O, how did Jacob's heart hold on upon this fitting clause !) for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." In this eventful meeting with God, Jacob had—so to speak—closed the contract; he accepted the covenant of his father's God; he made his vow, saying "If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, so that I come again to my father's house in peace ; then shall the Lord by my God."

The hour of trial was now come. Shall this covenant promise, God had given him, be fulfilled? It seems likely to fail. There are deep musings in Jacob's heart. Ah me, he says, is it possible that the course of deception by which I obtained the birthright and my father's

blessing is now coming up in judgment against me, to be regarded as a forfeiture of my claim upon that covenant promise? Very likely Jacob thought of this. But the covenant had been confirmed to him at Bethel, *after* all those deceptive transactions had occurred; so he still pleads its validity.

But had he not done many things during the past twenty years which might be held by the Lord as a forfeiture of the original covenant? O how did this question search his soul and put his faith to the most severe trial! No doubt he sees much sin to confess. The record shows that he felt a keen and penetrating sense of his own *unworthiness*. But must this fact of his unworthiness compel him to forego the promise and fall back upon blank despair? Must he give up all hope of help from his father's God?

Esau lies but a few miles distant. Night comes on. One night only can intervene before the momentous ques-

tion of life or death to himself and his numerous family must be decided. Oh what a night was that to Jacob! There is also another issue involved yet more solemn. Have I forfeited my covenant with my own and my father's God; or does it still stand?

The pall of night rests on Arabia's plains. The flocks and herds lay them down to repose; not so the anxious hearts of the mothers and the father. Jacob is alone. The great matters at issue between himself and Jehovah assume a tangible, physical embodiment, and the angel of the covenant, in form "a man," wrestled with him till break of day. Thus was embodied—so to speak—the mental struggle of that eventful night, between the patriarch and his God.

We know not all the points involved in that most wonderful scene. It is plain, however, that Jacob was pleading that God would interpose to save him from the open jaws of ruin, from a brother's excited

wrath, and that he held on fast upon the promise God had given him at Bethel;—"I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

The narrative, moreover, plainly intimates that the Lord put Jacob's faith to the severest trial. The heaven-sent wrestler, unable of a long time to prevail against him, touched the hollow of his thigh, and put it out of joint. Applying this to the mental struggle of prayer, it can scarcely mean less than that the Lord suffered the dark powers of hell to ply their hottest enginery to break down Jacob's faith, and drive him from his hold upon the covenant.

But still, through infinite grace, he conquered. Yes, a man, who has held out to wrestle all night, and then has his thigh put out of joint, still holds on upon his antagonist as with a death-grasp—"I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

And even this is not all. The Lord Himself seemed to repel his pleading sup-

pliant. Let me go now, said the wrestling angel;—we have been struggling here all night, and still the question is not settled; “let me go, for the day breaketh.” No, no! said the unyielding patriarch;—no never; I cannot let go of that blessed promise my God made me at Bethel; I cannot relinquish the covenant made with my fathers; I cannot endure to see my wives and children cut to pieces by the cruel sword—no; I have trusted in God these twenty years, and I cannot let thee go now;”—and—“*God blessed him there.*” “He called his name *Israel*, because as a prince hast thou power with God, *** and hast prevailed.”

Mark also what Hosea (12: 4) says of this transaction; “By his strength he had power with God, yea he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept and made supplication unto Him.”

The sequel of the story is soon told. Jacob had carried his point by the persevering faith of that eventful night, and

morning. The Lord put forth his finger and touched Esau's heart, and it became as water. The brothers met, as brothers ever should—in fraternal forgiveness and affection. All danger has vanished away.

But the thoughts, the struggles, the agonies of Jacob's mind in that eventful night constitute the most thrilling part of the whole transaction. O, could we see the whole, drawn to the life! Could the patriarch himself tell us!—Perhaps he will when we meet him in Paradise.

Does the course of the Lord towards Jacob in this long struggle seem strange to us? It may yet appear that the little images, hid among the favorite Rachel's stuff, had something to do in the matter. We may remember that the Lord pursued a very similar course towards Moses when the nation fell into grievous idolatry. It seemed then as if He would utterly refuse to be bound any longer by his covenant with their fathers. And nothing seemed

to change his averse attitude, except the most urgent, importunate pleading of Moses ;—nay more—nothing but Moses' throwing *himself* between the guilty people and the drawn sword of Jehovah, seeming to say—"Smite me first, but spare the nation, and remember thy holy covenant. Else, what wilt thou do for the honor of thy great name?"

The scenes of Jacob's prayer and triumph are full of most choice instruction and encouragement. Many a Christian parent has passed through similar scenes in prayer for the conversion of his children of the covenant.

Christian parent, are you wont thus to hold on? Do you say most humbly—yet with most fixed purpose—"I will not let thee go, except thou bless me?"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ASCRPTIONS FOR REDEEMING LOVE.

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory forever and ever.”—*Rev. 1: 5, 6.*

IT is sweet to fall into the current of holy feeling which flows through the soul of such a Christian as the exile of Patmos. There he was, a wanderer, but not from his God—under sentence of banishment, but not from the bright visions of the glory of Jesus. Happy for him that he had forsaken houses and lands and earthly favor and all selfish pleasure for Christ's sake; for he received his hundred fold more in the present life according to the promise. No matter to him

that the wrath of man fell on him in sore tribulation; the presence of Jesus is enough. Mark how his soul flows forth in deep emotions of adoration, ascriptions, and praise. "To Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever. Amen." Praise and glory to Him that hath loved us—and why not? Think of that love. From its own native home in the heavens, it sought out a rebel and a worm of the earth. It pitied—it came—it made the sacrifice of Calvary—it lives again on high to pour its blessings unmeasured and unmerited on such a soul as mine.

"And washed us from our sins in his own blood." Shall we stop here and coldly analyze and speculate upon the creed of this saint of God; or shall we throw ourselves into the holy current of his soul, and flow on with him forever? We will leave the cold-hearted dissection

of his theology to those who have a taste for it. It is easy to catch his meaning—would that we might also catch his spirit! He is conscious of being at peace with God through Jesus. He knows that his sins are blotted out, and he feels himself to have gained the victory over his own reigning corruptions. We need not stop to ask whether this victory is perfect—he calls it a “*victory*.” (1 John 5: 4.) Nor whether, being yet on earth, he is sinless. He doubtless in his simplicity said what he meant and what he felt. He is washed from his sins in the blood of Christ. He is conscious of being *changed*, and he can not help adoring the grace which hath done it—the power of that blood of the cross which both bought pardon and effected the cleansing. And why should he not adore and magnify such efficiency? Who that has leaned on Jesus’ bosom as he had, and felt his soul absorbed with love to the brethren, as his had been for a long life—who that

has passed from death in sin and selfishness into such newness of life, can suppress the bursting emotions of wonder and praise, when he thinks of "Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood?"

But the wonders of grace are not yet exhausted. Not for nothing were we washed from our sins, and surely not that we should return to our "wallowing"—but to be made "kings and priests unto God" even the "Father!" O, the unmerited exaltation! How the soul sinks into the dust under the painful yet pleasing sense of utter unworthiness and emptiness!

But all is of grace. And it is blessed to think that this grace will be magnified through all heaven and during everlasting ages, because it did raise from dust and guilt and pollution such beings as we, and make us kings and priests unto God the Father. We will join in the song *even now*, and swell its everlasting strains. We

will cast our crowns at the foot of that throne, (we can now,) and strive to be lost ourselves in the universal glory and homage that are given and belong to Him that sits on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. Yes, let us be *lost* in it. O, to be nothing, that God may be all! O! to be seen and known only as monuments of his surprising love and unutterable grace, to pour out our songs and our very souls before the throne, and before all the blest throng, ascribing thanksgiving, and glory, and honor, and praise, to Him who only is worthy of all forever!!

Dear reader, are thy sympathies all in harmony with that song? Already are they attuned to the melody of heaven? Even now do they catch the hallowed strain? Fain would I charm your soul upward, and bring it within the attraction of that thrilling song; but how powerless are words like mine, and indeed all mere words towards such a result. God must do it. His Spirit can. Sought and relied

on by faith He will. To that blest Agent, dear reader of these pages, I commend thee, that he may wash thy soul from sin, and waken within thee the sympathies and holy aspirations that glowed in the bosom of him "whom Jesus loved."

THE END.

J. M. FITCH'S PUBLICATIONS:

OBERLIN, OHIO.

THE
THEOLOGICAL WORKS
OF

Rev. Charles G. Finney,

Prof. of Theology in Oberlin Collegiate Institute.

LECTURES ON SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY,

Embracing Lectures on Moral Government, together with Atonement, Moral and Physical Depravity, Regeneration, Philosophical Theories, and Evidences of Regeneration. 600 pp., 8vo., \$2,00,

LECTURES ON SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY,

Embracing Ability, (Natural, Moral and Gracious,) Repentance, Impenitence, Faith and Unbelief, Justification, Sanctification, Election, Reprobation, Divine Purposes, Divine Sovereignty, and Perseverance. 583 pp. 8vo., \$2,00.

WE will not speak of these works in this place, further than to say that we deem them works of great importance to the Church and the Ministry.

They are *works of merit*, which, we believe, are destined to exert a great influence in the world, and to retain a high place in the estimation of the Church to the latest period of her history.

The *greater part* of the first edition of each of these works—two thousand copies—has already been sold. *They may be each sent by mail, in paper covers, and postage paid by the publisher, for \$2,00.*

J. M. FITCH'S Miscellaneous Publications.

ISSUED FROM THE OBERLIN PRESS.

GUIDE TO THE SAVIOR, OR,

CONDITIONS OF ATTAINING TO AND ABIDING IN
ENTIRE HOLINESS OF HEART AND LIFE.

By Professor C. G. Finney.

THIS work discusses in a most interesting and spiritual manner, the relations in which we need to have Christ revealed to us, in 61 sections. It is not only exceedingly rich in spiritual instruction, but

exceedingly lively and interesting. 204 pp. Cloth 37½ cents; half gilt, 56; full gilt, 62½. Price by mail, without expense of postage to the publisher, 25 cents. *Five* copies, one dollar. Postage 6½ cents.

“MY MOTHER,”

BY REV. ALBERT BUSHNELL,

Missionary on the Gaboon, Western Africa.

THIS memoir of the sainted mother of one of the most devoted and self-sacrificing missionaries now in the foreign field, commends itself to all, especially to mothers, by its rich missionary spirit—its narrative of prevalence in prayer—its exhibition of singular maternal influence and success—as well as by numerous other excellencies. Parents cannot fail to be benefitted by its examples and suggestions. 166 pp. Cloth 33 cents; half gilt, 50; full gilt, 56. Price by mail, without expense of postage to the publisher, two shillings. *Five* copies, one dollar. Postage 5½ cents.

DOCTRINE OF THE WILL,

BY REV. ASA MAHAN,

President of the Oberlin Collegiate Institute.

Third edition. 233 pp., 12mo. 50 cents.

Social and Sabbath School Hymns,

BY GEORGE N. ALLEN, A. M.,

Professor of Music in Oberlin Collegiate Institute.

A most precious little hymn book. 180 pp.

Science of Moral Philosophy,

BY REV. ASA MAHAN,

Pres. of Oberlin Collegiate Institute,

Author of "A System of Intellectual Philosophy,"

"Doctrine of the Will," &c.

420 pp., 12 mo.

Price 1,00.

It is believed that this work, which has been prepared with great care by the author, will need no other testimonials to recommend it to the favorable notice of the public, than such as are found in the known ability of President Mahan as a writer, especially on the Sciences of Mental and Moral Philosophy.

This work will be sent by mail, (and all postage paid by the publisher,) for 1,00.

GOSPEL MANNA

FOR

CHRISTIAN PILGRIMS,

By Rev. Henry Cowles,

Editor of the Oberlin Evangelist, and Late Professor
of Old Testament Literature in Oberlin
Theological Seminary.

276 pp.

Four copies sent by mail for \$1

THIS work to be appreciated, needs but to be read by the sincere Christian. The influence of its well expressed truth comes over the soul like spray from the fountain of life, and leads it onward and upward to Christ and Heaven.

THE SINNER'S EXCUSES.

SHOWING THAT EXCUSES FOR NEGLECT OF DUTY,
CONDEMN GOD.

BY REV C. G. FINNEY,

Professor of Theology, in the Oberlin
Theological Seminary.

THIS little work contains 72 pages, and is put up in neat printed covers. For those who would qualify themselves to meet and remove the excuses which fill the mouths and bewilder the judgment of multitudes

who are unwilling to do their duty, or who would circulate a little work that will cut like the "Sword of the Spirit," we could not select a more useful publication. Price, one shilling. \$1,00 a dozen.

PAMPHLETS, & c.

Reply to Duffield's Warning against Error,
By Prof. Finney. 47 pp., twelve-and-a-half cents.

Acceptable Holiness.
By Prof. Jno. Morgan. 48 pp., twelve-and-a-half cents.

The Reviewer Reviewed.
By Prof. Finney. 60 pp., twelve-and-a-half cents.

Hebrew Servitude.
A successful refutation of the charge that the Bible sanctions slavery. By Putnam Barron, M. D., of Edinburgh, Ohio.

P E R I O D I C A L S .

The Oberlin Quarterly Review,

EDITED BY PRES. A. MAHAN & PROF. C. G. FINNEY,

Is issued on the first days of January, April, July, and October. Each number contains 125 royal octavo pages; making 500 pages a year. It is printed on clear small pica type, and thick, white paper.

The Quarterly is designed to sustain a pure literature, a sound philosophy, a correct theology, a practical morality, and a spiritual religion. \$2,00 a year.

J. M. FITCH, *Publisher.*

THE OBERLIN EVANGELIST.

A Religious Periodical,

EDITED BY REV. HENRY COWLES,

Is published every *alternate week*. There are 26 numbers a year, of eight large quarto pages each, with title page and index added at the end of the year. This paper has now completed its tenth volume, with a subscription list of nearly *five thousand*. The rich Christian experience the Evangelist details, and the high standard of piety it inculcates, should make it dear to every Christian. \$1,00 a year in advance.

J. M. FITCH, *Publisher.*

IN PRESS.

The Heathen Nations:

OR,

DUTY OF THE PRESENT GENERATION

TO EVANGELIZE THE HEATHEN WORLD.

BY THE

Sandwich Island Missionaries.

WITH LETTERS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE WORLD'S

CONVERSION, BY REV. J. S. GREEN,

SANDWICH ISLANDS.

This is to be a work of about 275 pages. It presses upon Christians a sense of their obligation to the dying heathen, with tremendous power. All who expect to meet them at the Judgment ought here to listen to their cry.

Price of Oberlin Books,

BY THE DOZEN.

GOSPEL MANNA, cloth, full gilt back, -	\$4,00
GUIDE TO THE SAVIOR, do., do., - - -	3,00
"MY MOTHER," do., do., - - -	2,64
MORAL PHILOSOPHY, do., do., - - -	7,20
THE SINNER'S EXCUSES, paper, - - - -	,75

New & Valuable Works

Preparing for Publication by J. M. Fitch.

Conditions of Prevailing Prayer,

BY REV. C. G. FINNEY.

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air ;
His watch-word at the gate of death,
He enters heaven with prayer."



BX
7233

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: April 2006

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 017 524 671 A

